A1

ATOMIC PULP

A1 BOOK TWO

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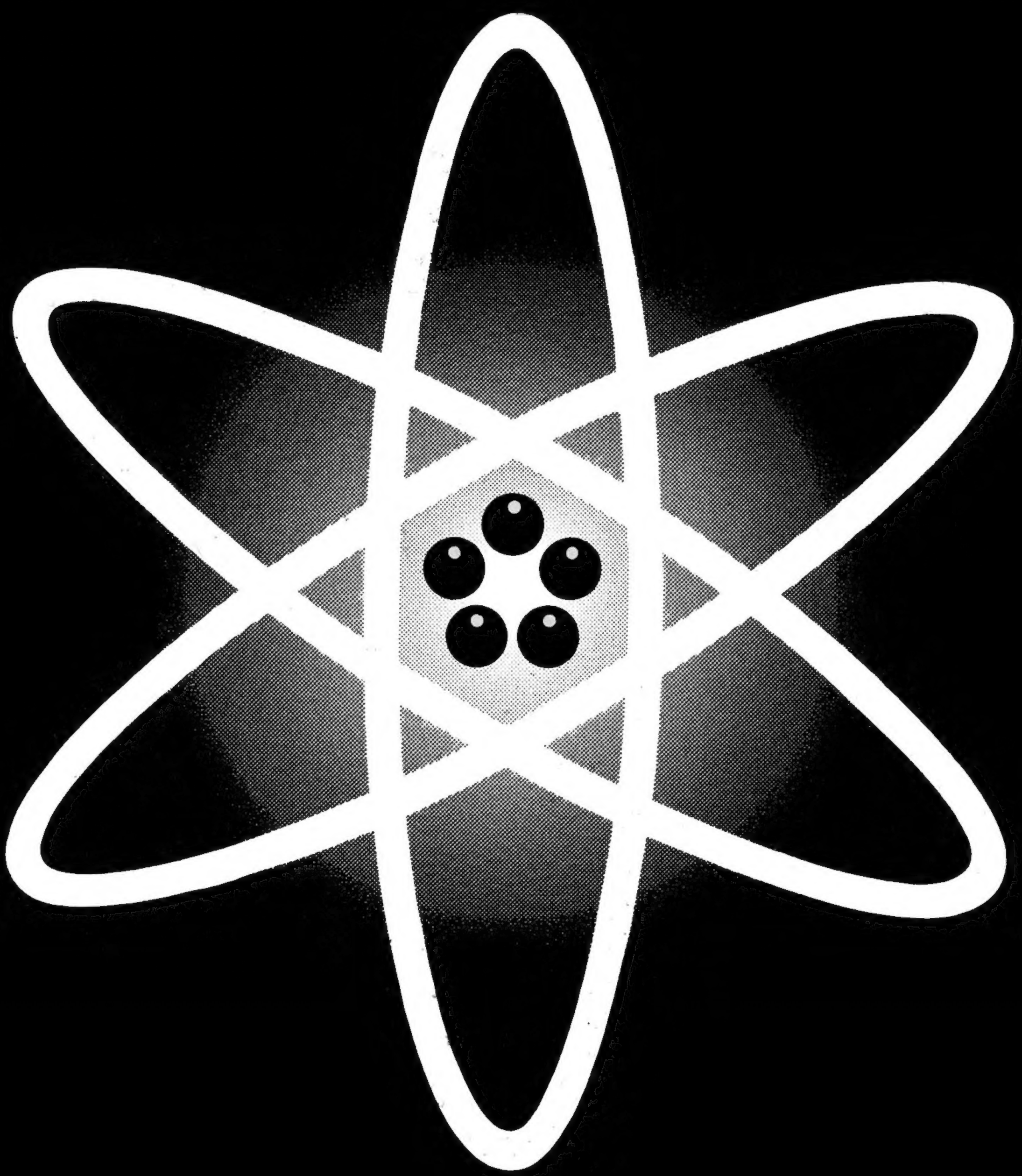

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WITHOUT WHOM

THE COMIC SHOP KIDS

Once again, They Know Who, Why, Where, When and How!

FOR SIGNERS CRAMP

Brian Bolland, John Bolton, Dougie Braithwaite, Dave McKean, Gary & Warren Pleece

GOOD EGGS

Liliana, Mike, Leigh, Chris, Mark, Tony, Pat, Mike, Paul, Andy, Nick, Wilf, Zoe, Brett, Steve, Tom, Kai, Chris, Matthew & Albert/Litho Plates, Richard & Chris/Phoenix Press, Mike & Meena, Frank & Hass, Woodrow, Cliff & Ward, Matt Wagner, Diana Schutz, Phil LaSorda, Dennis Fujitake, Tom Yeates, John Berger, Paul Collett, Kate Hughes, Wayne Markley, Dan Abnett, Dominic Wells, Marty Stever, Arthur Marcus, Don & Maggie, Jason & Kim, Sue & Dini/Design for Change.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Randy and Jean-Marc Lofficier/Starwatcher Graphics

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MESSAGES

EARTH DAY, APRIL 22nd 1990. Support your planet, it's the only one you've got!!
Special Congratulations to Dan & Nancy.
Good luck to Rube at the N.F.T.
Congratulations to Kevin & Deanne Nowlan on the birth of their daughter Paige.

MAD PUBLISHERS IN BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION SHOCK!

Leaked documents found on a local waste-tip suggest an insidious plot by unknown fiends to publish a fourth issue of the comic-book A1. Your intrepid reporter has tracked down the perpetrators, however. A1 is allegedly published quarterly and © 1990 ATOMEKA PRESS, P.O. Box 1585, London NW6 1PW. The publishers, Dave ("If you've got a camera I'm wearing a paper bag over my head") Elliott and Garry ("I'm not coming out of the toilet until you go away") Leach, refused to make any comment, except to say "all rights reserved" and "the creators' views and opinions are not necessarily those of the publishers". Reliable sources state that all characters and stories in the magazine are © their respective creators. Rumour has it that the book is printed in the USA, and has a print run of 22,000. When asked if they were not ashamed of what they were doing, the publishers became angry and, as they had totally failed to offer any sort of bribe or other interesting form of corruption, your shocked reporter made his excuses and left.

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REPORTS **ARE**, THAT THIS HOSTAGE SITUATION AROSE FROM AN ARREST THAT WENT HORRIBLY WRONG.

THE GUNMAN, JOHN HAIG, WAS BEING ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF OTHER CRIMES. HIS RESISTANCE AND THE STRUGGLE THAT FOLLOWED LED TO HAIG GRABBING ONE OF THE ARRESTING OFFICERS' WEAPONS AND KILLING HIM WITH IT.

THE MURDERED C.O.P. HAS BEEN NAMED AS DETECTIVE CHAUCY PALLOW.

HAIG NOW HOLDS THE OTHER OFFICER, PATROLMAN HUGH FINCH AS A HOSTAGE. HAIG HAS YET TO MAKE ANY DEMANDS.

E L L O T O S H

STAY TUNED AS OUR ROVING ACTION NEWSTEAM COVERS THE EVENT OF DETECTIVE PALLOW'S DEATH BEING TOLD TO HIS WIDOW.

AFTER **THESE** MESSAG

ZZZPT

BBANG!

CANNIBALISM

PROMOTES HEALTHY TEETH & GUMS

COP

FISH PASTE

I'M GOING TO KILL YOU, COPPER. BEFORE WE'RE DONE, I'LL SEE YOU DEAD.

YOU BROUGHT THIS CIRCUS ON ME. YOU AND YOUR DUMB, DEAD PARTNER.

DON'T WORRY, YOU'VE GOT A WHILE YET. FOR NOW, I HAVE TO LET YOU LIVE. YOU'RE MY PROTECTION...

WHILE I HAVE **YOU**...

PROMOTES HEALTHY TEETH & GUMS

...THE C.O.P.'S CAN'T DO A THING.

COP

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A BIT OF A PUZZLE WAS THIS ONE. CHILDREN RAPED AND MURDERED, ALL ACROSS THE CITY.

NO CLUES AT FIRST. JUST DEAD KIDS AND HYSTERICAL PARENTS.

COP
SNIPHEY
KOFFY
PHARTI
DROOLEY
DRIPPI
Sgt PHLEGM

THEN WE GOT A DESCRIPTION OF A MAN RUNNING FROM THE SCENE.

WE ALREADY HAD HIS BLOOD TYPE FROM THE SEMEN TRACES.

C.O.P
SNIPHEY
KOFFY
TWERP

TWO CLUES, BUT NOT ENOUGH TO GO ON.

HE GOT SLOPPY.

BEAT A KID'S HEAD IN WITH A TYRE IRON.

WE FOUND THE WEAPON. WE FOUND A FINGER-PRINT.

WE FOUND OUR MAN.

AN ARREST TEAM WAS SENT.

THEY GOT SLOPPY.

I HATE CHILD KILLERS.

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MY SISTER'D BE... WHAT?... THIRTY-SIX IF SHE'D LIVED.

A YEAR OLDER THAN ME. SHE WAS MY LOOK OUT. MY COHORT.

MY FRIEND.

THEN ONE DAY... AFTER SCHOOL... THE BOGEYMAN CAME AND TOOK HER AWAY.

SHE WAS TEN.

I HATE CHILD KILLERS.

COP

GRENDEL

Devil's Whisper

A GRENDEL TALE BY JAMES ROBINSON + D'ISRAELI

GRENDEL CREATED BY MATT WAGNER

CHRISTINE SPAR... ARGENT SAID SHE HAD TO BE STOPPED, SO WE STOPPED HER.

BUT I KNEW HER PAIN. HER BOY BEING DEAD.

I KNEW TONIGHT WOULD COME. TONIGHT I'M FILLED WITH RIGHTEOUS FURY.

TONIGHT I GET THE CHANCE...

...TO FEEL THE RAGE OF GRENDEL.

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I'VE KEPT LI SUNG'S MASK ON ME.

CARRYING IT AROUND LIKE SOME SICK TROPHY.

IT STILL SMELLS OF HIS HAIR CREAM. THE DICKHEAD.

DUMB FAGGOT **SLANT** DIDN'T HAVE IT.

THE ANGER. THE PAIN.

BUT TONIGHT I DO.

TONIGHT I HEAR THE DEVIL'S WHISPER.

TONIGHT **I AM**... AM I? ... **GRENDEL**?

RIOT-PROOF

YOU MEN... **BACK AWAY!**

BUT SIR, WE CAN'T JUST...

YOU HEARD ME! BACK AWAY!!

C.O.P.

DRIPP!

COP

DROOLEY

I'M GOING IN ALONE.

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CANNIBALISM

COP

COP

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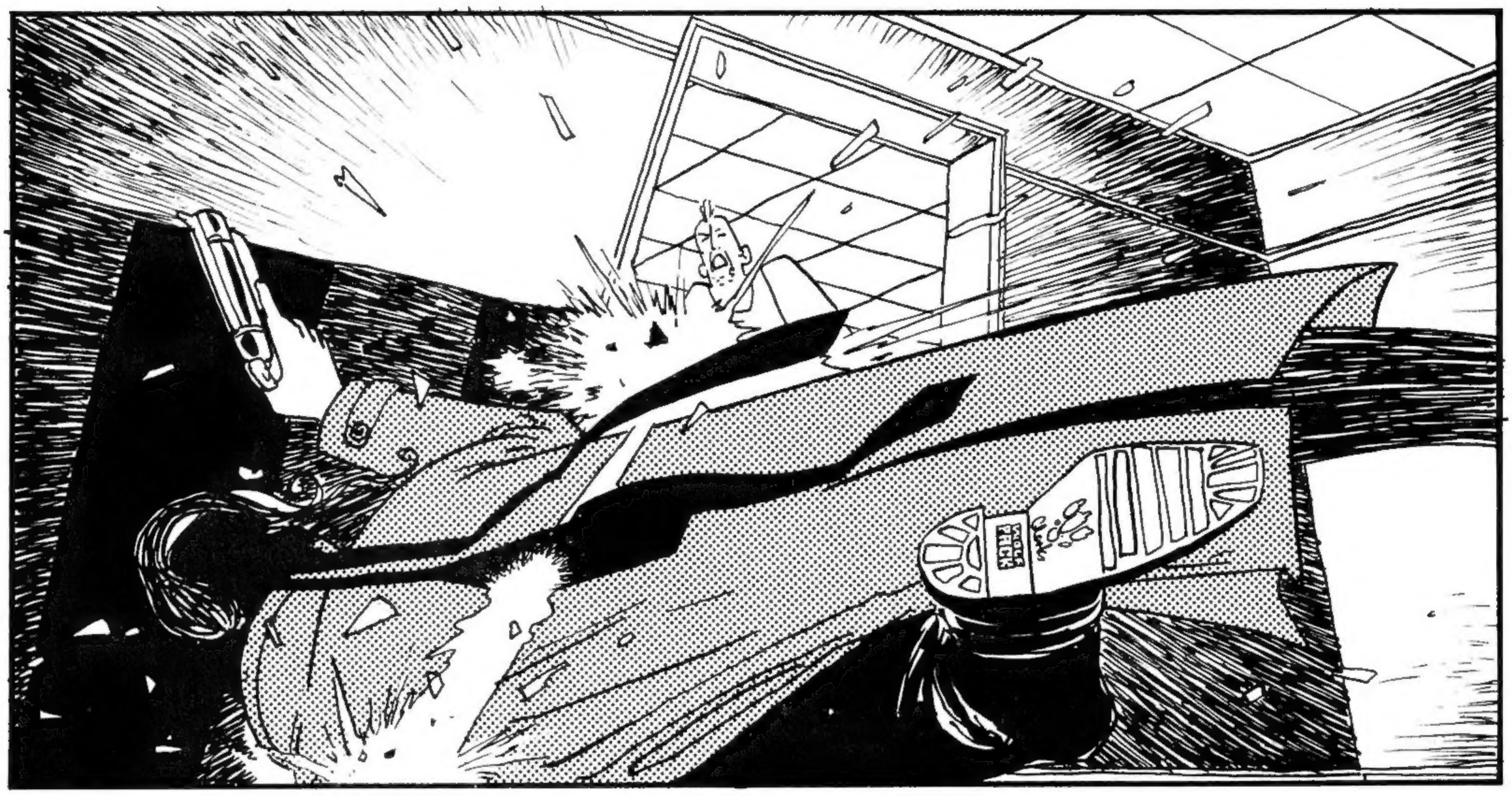

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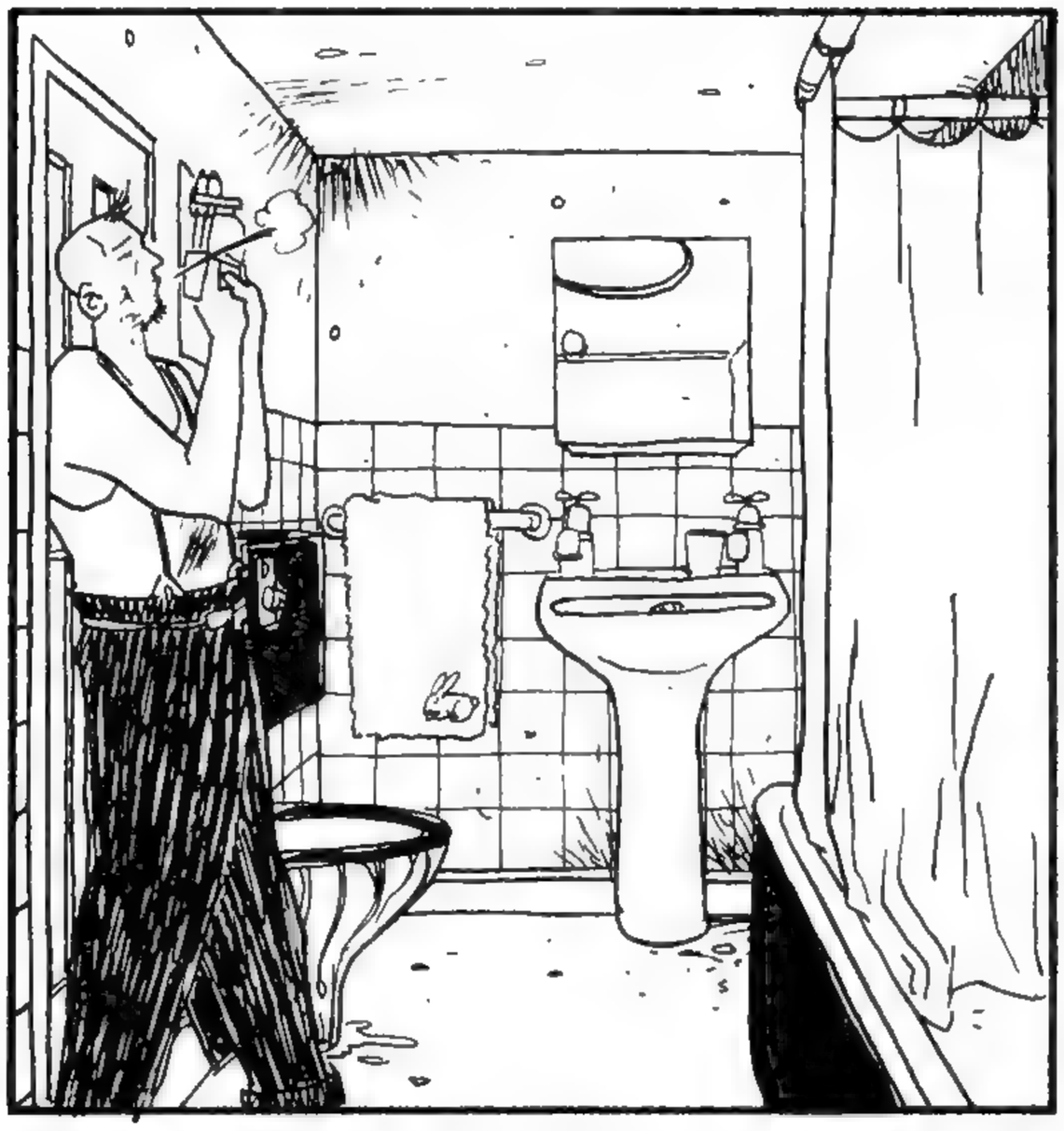

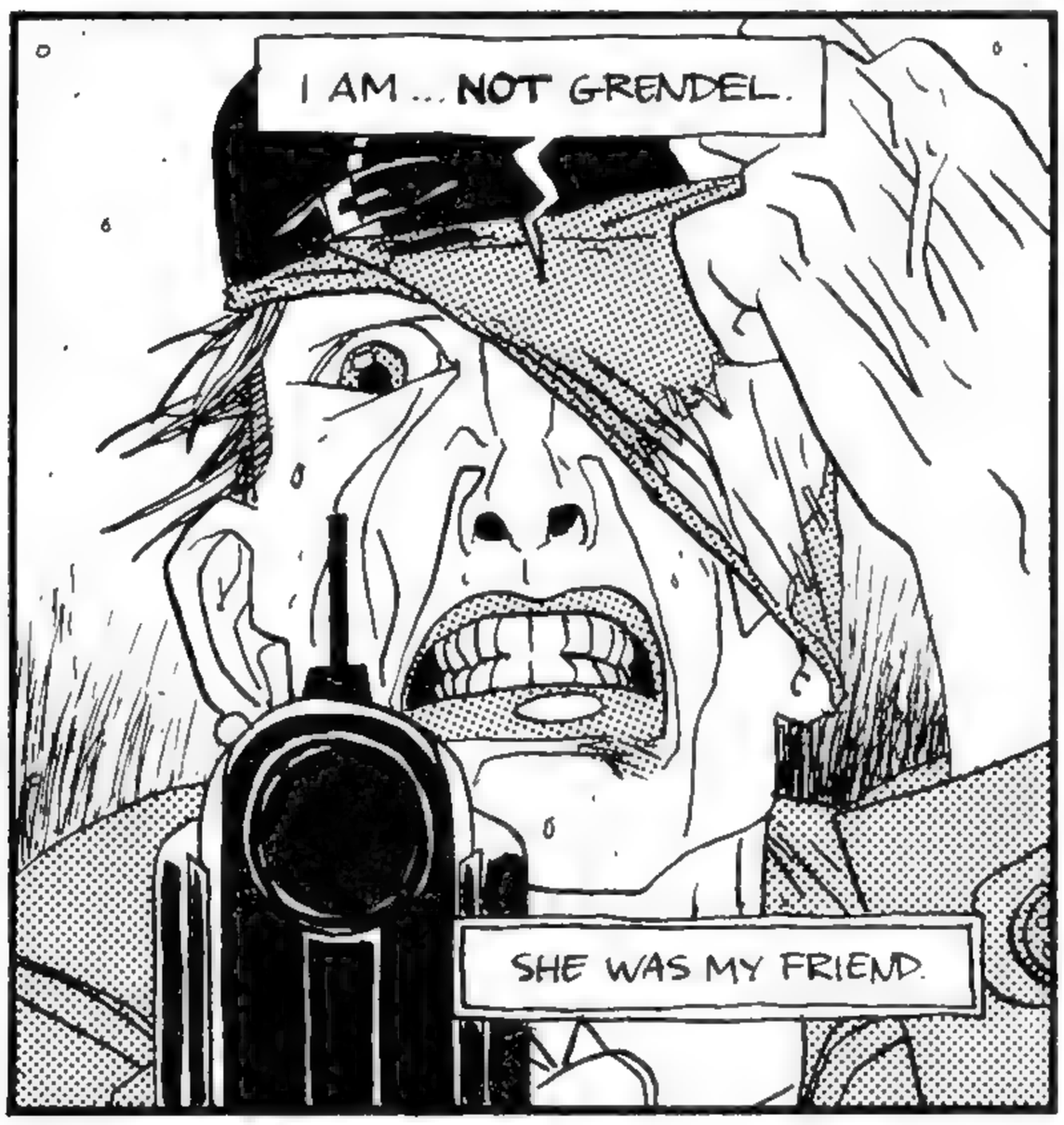

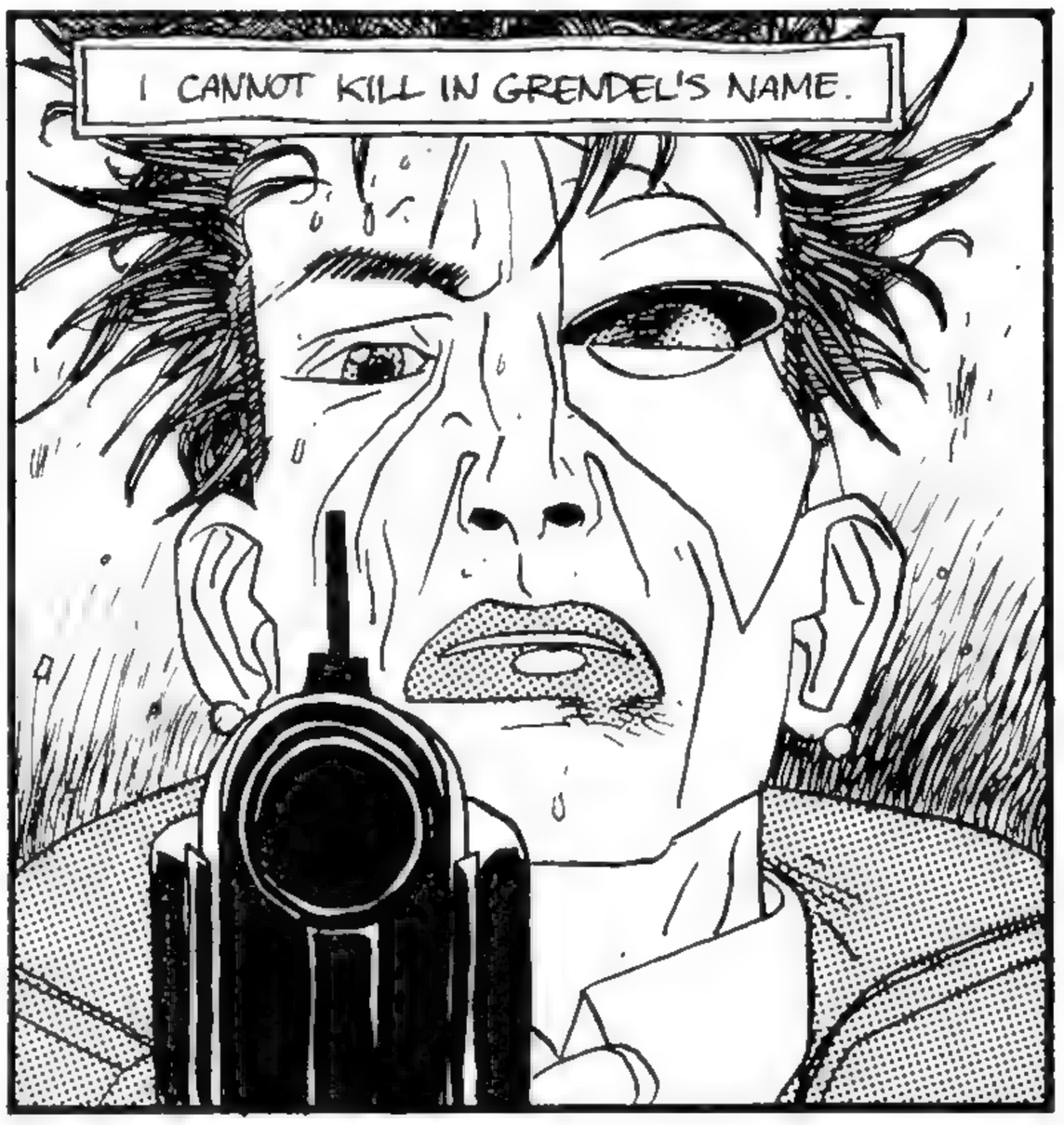

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I'M A C.O.P.

I'M DUTY BOUND TO ARREST YOU.

I REMEMBER HER DARK BROWN HAIR.

...HER EYES.

SHE WAS MY FRIEND.

OH, FUCK IT!

I HATE CHILD KILLERS.

D'END

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is Matt Wagner's

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HELLCITY

HEWLETT AND MARTIN 1989©

THREE IN THE AFTERNOON IN THE DOWNTOWN AREA. IT'S RAINING HARD - THE KIND OF RAIN YOU CAN SMELL. AS IT FLOODS THE SEWERS AND LIFTS THE SCUM UP THROUGH THE DRAINS AND ON TO THE STREETS. AND, AS ALWAYS, WHEN THE RAIN FALLS HARD ON THE ROOF TOPS OF THIS DIRTY OLD CITY, IT WASHES THE SCUM OUT OF EVERY TENEMENT AND MORTAR SHACK INTO THE ALLEYWAYS AND BOOZE HOUSES....

BUT WHEN IT RAINS THERE IS NOTHING CLEAN OR FRESH ABOUT THIS CITY.. IT'S LIKE POURING A GLASS OF WATER INTO A TOILET FULL OF LAST NIGHT'S VINDALOO... THE RAIN JUST STIRS UP THE SHIT..

WELL, LIKE IT OR NOT, HERE WE ARE. AMERICA. THE YOUNGEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD, A COUNTRY WITH NO HISTORY EXCEPT FOR CRIME.... I'LL SAY THIS NOW AND I'LL SAY IT LOUD, JUST SO YOU KNOW WHERE I'M COMI-NG FROM - **THIS COUNTRY WAS STOLEN FROM THE INDIANS.** PRETTY OBVIOUS, I KNOW. BUT HEY, ASK YOURSELF WHERE THE INDIANS FIGURE IN THE AMERICAN DREAM. ASK YOURSELF WHAT HAPPENED TO THAT GLORIOUS RACE AND THAT GLORIOUS CULTURE. IT'S ALL PACKED AWAY. IN GLASS CASES. IN MUSEUMS.

WE ALL KNOW THE COUNTRY AS IT IS TODAY AND, AS YOU WOULD QUITE EXPECT, THE MOST POPULAR FORM OF EMPLOYMENT IS CRIME..

GIVE US YOUR MONEY, DIRTBAG!

DON'T HURT ME!

JOHN BON JOVI

YES!

NO! NOOO!

UH?

HOLY..

SMACK!

SHIT!?

?

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CRIES OF HELP NEVER GO UNHEEDED: THERE'S ALWAYS A SUPERHERO OR TWO ABOUT, READY AND WILLING TO JUMP IN AND SAVE THE DAY.
INFACT, THE RATIO OF SUPER-HEROES TO CRIMINALS IN THIS CITY IS ABOUT ONE TO ONE. WE JUST LET THEM BASH IT OUT BETWEEN THEMSELVES. HOWEVER THERE'S USUALLY SOMETHING BIGGER TO DEAL WITH..

...TODAY THERE WAS SOMETHING IN THE AIR, SOMETHING BIG..... AND I MEAN BIG!

FUCK AROUND!

GODZOLLA'S COME TO TOWN TO PLAY A LITTLE 'ONE ON ONE' WITH THE NATION'S POWERFUL TASK FORCE. WELL NOW, THE COMBINED FORCES OF THE ARMY, NAVY, AIRFORCE, POLICE AND ASSORTED SUPER-HEROES DIDN'T SEEM TO BE MAKING MUCH OF AN IMPRESSION ON THE OLD GOD MONSTER. HE JUST CRUSHED THEM INTO THE DIRT.

AND THAT'S WHERE WE COME IN...IN FACT, THAT'S WHERE WE ALWAYS COME IN! WHEN THE BIGBOYS REALISE THAT THEY'RE TOO CRAP TO HANDLE THE PROBLEM THEY'LL CALL IN THE SKUNK SQUAD (THAT'S OUR UNIT). FEARLESS, UNREPENTANT, STINKING RICH (DUE TO OUR MASSIVE CRIME-FIGHTING PAY PACKETS) AND JUST A TAD SMARTER THAN YOUR AVERAGE BOY IN BLUE. AS I ALWAYS SAY, 'IT'S All A MATTER OF KNOWING WHERE THE REAL CRIME LAYS'.

ARRH!

RRRRRIIIP!

YUKON

HONK!

HONK!

HONK!

SHIFT IT BUTT FUCK!

MOVE OVER, ASSHOLE

BUT JUST FOR NOW, AS YOU MIGHT EXPECT WITH GODZOLLA PLAYING 'PIN THE TAIL ON THE DONKEY' WITH THE AIRFORCE'S MOST SECRET HIGH POWER HELICOPTER AND THE GOVERNMENT MUNICIPAL BUILDING, WE'RE STUCK IN A TRAFFIC JAM.....

"IF I WERE YOU, AND YOU WERE ME, WHAT A STRANGE AND INTERESTING PLACE THIS WOULD BE!"

WHO SAID THAT?

I DID, JUST NOW.

LOOK, ROB ROY, IF YOU'RE GONNA TALK PHILOSOPHY WITH ME, TRY AND BE SERIOUS.

SHIT!

AND QUIT SHIFTING AROUND. I KEEP SPILLING MY COFFEE!

PARDON ME FOR BREATHING!

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WHY DONT YOU MAKE YOURSELF USEFUL? GET ON THE BLOWER TO THE CHIEF AND FIND OUT WHERE THEYRE AT....

FOR SURE!

HELLO! HELLO! SKUNK SQUAD TO FATSO! WHERE ARE YOU AT, MY ROTUND LITTLE FRIEND?

LESS OF YOUR LIP, FINGERHEAD! THE MONSTER H'S NOW REACH-ED 53RD AND THIRD.. HOW LONG WILL YOU BE? THINGS ARE LOOK-ING REAL BAD HERE..

THINGS ARE LOOKING REAL BAD HERE, TOO! WE'LL BE ABOUT FIVE MINUTES!

THIRTY MINUTES LATER..

WELL, HERE WE ARE, FASTER THAN A SPEEDING BULLET! FILL US IN WITH THE BAD NEWS, CHIEF.

WELL, LETS SEE... HE STARTED OFF WITH THE POOL HALL, WASHED DOWN WITH A FEW HANDFULS OF KRISHNA DISCIPLES... THEN HE MOVED ON TO A MAIN COURSE OF THE GENERAL MOTORS BUILDING WITH A DASH OF THE ROYAL THEATRE AND FINISHED UP WITH AN AFTER-DINNER MINT OF A ROLLS ROYCE CONTAINING THE MAYOR'S WIFE AND CHILDREN...

I DONT THINK WE CAN STOP HIM!

HAVE YOU TRIED A MASSIVE PACKET OF SICKLY CHEWY SWEETS?

OF COURSE!

ENOUGH OF THIS IDLE BANTER.. I THINK I CAN DO IT! BUT IT'LL COST.. IT'S A VERY DANGEROUS JOB..

OH GREAT, DANY.. HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT?

HANG ON, I'LL PHONE THE PRESIDENT!

MM.. ABOUT ONE HUNDRED MILLION SHOULD COVER IT...

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THEY BOUGHT IT! THE PRESIDENT AGREED TO THE PRICE AND THE MONEY WAS ALMOST IN THE BAG.. ALL WE HAD TO DO NOW WAS STOP GODZOLLA !

FIRST UP WE HAD TO FIND OUT ABOUT THIS CRAZY MONSTER. THE ONLY BOOKS WE COULD FIND IN THE LOCAL LIBRARY WERE COPIES OF 'FLY FISHING' BY J.R. HARTLEY AND LARGE PRINT VOLUMES OF DORIS STOKES' LATEST NOVEL 'HOW STRANGE WAS MY BREAKFAST'.....

JEFFERSON

ONLY ONE THING FOR IT, ROB ROY... BACK TO THE OLD ANCESTRAL SEAT...

PLANKTON HALL... FOR TWO HUNDRED YEARS THIS HAS BEEN HOME TO GENERATION AFTER GENERATION OF PLANKS,... AND IT LOOKS LIKE THE BUCK STOPS WITH ME, DANY PLANK.. OH WELL, LETS GET ON WITH IT.....

I'LL GO TO THE STUDY, YOU GO TO THE KITCHEN AND FIX US A SNACK.

HELL

VROOOM!

NOW, I WANT YOU TO BE ON YOUR BEST BEHAVIOUR. MUM AND DAD LOVE THIS PLACE. IT'S NOT JUST THEIR HOME, IT'S THEIR ENTIRE WORLD!

WOW, THIS FAMILY'S GOT HISTORY! THAT GIRL HAS GOT REAL REGAL ROOTS! I WONDER WHY SHE NEVER MENTIONS IT?

AT LAST! THE KITCHEN! A CULINARY OASIS IN THIS DESERT OF CULTURE! THIS CALLS FOR ONE OF MY FAMOUS 'FINGERHEAD' SNACKS!

OR PLANK

SEVERIN PLANK

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YES OH YES, SUSTENANCE, THAT'S WHAT'S NEEDED BY OUR TWO HEROIC CRIME FIGHTERS ON THIS COLD WINTER'S DAY.

AH! FOUND IT! HEY, ROB ROY, WHAT'S YOUR LATIN LIKE?

SAINT JULIAN JULIAN

MY LATIN? IT'S CRAP! BUT MY SANDWICHES ARE GREAT.

HOLD THE LADDER, I'M COMING DOWN..

HALF AN HOUR LATER...

FOUND ANYTHING?

NOPE. HANG ON WHAT DOES 'VIRIDIS DEUS PARTUS PORE-NTOSUS' MEAN?

LARGE GREEN GOD MONSTER, THAT'S HIM! LET ME SEE...

GET ON THE PHONE TO THE POLICE CHIEF AND TELL HIM TO TURN OFF ALL THE SIRENS.. ALL OF THEM, Y'HEAR?

LET ME SEE NOW ...MOLLIS MACULA... A SOFT SPOT! JUST LIKE A HUMAN CHILD HE HAS A SOFT PATCH ON THE TOP OF HIS SKULL THAT HARDENS WITH AGE... PERFECT ACCESS TO THE ALICUI CEREBRUM!

THE CHIEF SAYS HE'LL TURN OFF ALL THE SIRENS, BUT HE WANTS TO KNOW WHAT THE FUCK YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING!

IT SAYS HERE THAT GODZOLLA IS ONLY A CHILD MONSTER, IN SEARCH OF HIS MOTHER. HE FOLLOWS HIS MOTHER'S WAILING, A VERY DISTINCTIVE HIGH PITCHED SCREAM THAT ALTERNATES BETWEEN TWO OCTAVES— AND AFTER SEARCHING FOR HER, HE RETURNS TO THE OCEAN TO REST FOR ANOTHER FIVE HUNDRED YEARS....

NICE!..

OK, IF YOU SAY SO!

ZOLLA

WE'VE GOT SOME THINKING TO DO! LETS GO TO THE T.V. ROOM, IT'LL HELP ME TO CONCENTRATE!

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SONY

OY! DO YOUR CLOTHES SMELL OF ARSE HAIR WHEN YOU IRON?

CLICK!

SONY

BING BING. HI MAN! IVE COME ABOUT A CHOICES PENSION..

CLICK!

SONY

..UCK OOH! AAH! OH YES! YOURE SO WELL HUNG!!

CLICK!

SONY

.. WHA! GET KNOTTED, MR HEDGES!..

CLICK!

DANY.. HEY, DANY, IF YOU DONT WANT THAT SANDWICH I THINK I COULD FIND A HOME FOR IT...

SHHHHH! I'M THINKING...

CLICK! FZZZZ!

GIVE IT TO ME, YOU BIG MOTHER FU..

CLICK! FZZZZ!

... GLOBAL WARMING, VILLAGES AND ROADS IN ALASKA BUILT ON ICE SHELVES ARE STARTING TO SUBSIDE.... POLE-SHAPED FREEZER UNITS HAVE BEEN DEVELOPED TO HELP KEEP THE ICE POCKETS SOLID.. MACHINES TO BE.... FZZZZ!

THAT'S IT! THAT'S JUST THE TICKET! ROB, PHONE THE CHIEF AND GET HIM TO FIND ONE OF THOSE FREEZER UNITS AND WHATEVER THEY USE TO BANG IT IN THE GROUND WITH.. I'LL GET THE CAR STARTED..

UH? WHAT!?

AND SO, MINUTES LATER...

CHIEF? COME IN, MY BIG LARDY-CAKE BUDDY..

DANY? CRACKLE, WHERE ARE YOU? IT'S SHEER CARNAGE HERE! IT'S HELL ON EARTH, IT'S NOT VERY NICE AT ALL, CRACKLE!

VROOM

ERT!

LISTEN, CHIEF, I'M GONNA NEED ALL OF THE SQUAD CARS ON THE CORNER OF 7th AVENUE IN TEN MINUTES AND REMEMBER KEEP THOSE SIRENS OFF. PLANK OUT.

ALL WE NEED NOW IS THE LAST IN-GREDIENT..

THIS MORNING'S THUNDER STORM LOOKS SET TO STAY WITH US UNTIL TOMORROW MORNING..

LISTEN!

SLEET AND SNOW FOLLOWED BY ELECTRIC STORMS.., AND IF YOURE PLANNING ON GOING TO THE JANUARY SALES TODAY, FORGET IT! GODZOLLA IS CAUSING A MAJOR DISTURBANCE IN THE DOWN TOWN AREA....

ELECTRIC STORMS! THAT'S JUST WHAT WE NEED... IT'S ALL FITTING TOGETHER JUST LIKE A JIGSAW PUZZLE!

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MEANWHILE...

FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, THEY SHOULD BE HERE BY NOW! IF THEYRE NOT HERE SOON WE'LL HAVE TO CALL IN THE NUCLEAR STRIKE FORCE, BOB... GET ON TO CONTROL, TELL THEM TO BE ON STAND BY.....

OK!

?

VROOM ERT!

HELL

AT LAST!

YOU TOOK YOUR TIME..... NOW WHAT'S THIS INCREDIBLE PLAN OF YOURS?

HOW MANY POLICE CARS ARE THERE HERE, CHIEF?

RECKON THERE'S ABOUT FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY OR SO, WHY DO YOU ASK?

I WANT YOU TO TURN ON ALL THE SIRENS NOW, ALL OF THEM!

OK! WHATEVER YOU SAY!

HELL

WEEE

„JUST LIKE ME! I'M A .... SUPERHERO!

FA-LEX

BOING!

YOU MAY BE WONDERING ABOUT THE ABUNDANCE OF SUPERHEROES IN THIS CITY... WELL, DRUGS. IT'S ALL BECAUSE OF DRUGS. AROUND THE TIME OF MY BIRTH WOMEN WERE USING THE NOW-BANNED PAIN-KILLER 'DD18'. THE ONE UNKNOWN SIDE EFFECT OF THIS DRUG WAS USERS PRODUCING CHILDREN WITH THE PHYSICAL POWERS OF SUPER HEROES....

PRATT!

BIG 'N' SEXY, STRONG 'N' SPUNKY, LARGE 'N' SWOLLEN

AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, WITH SO MANY SUPER-HEROES ABOUT, THEY ALL BEGIN TO BECOME A BIT ORDINARY..... AND, OF COURSE, THERE WAS MY DEAR OLD SCHOOL FRIEND 'STELLA MAN'.. WHAT'S THE POINT IN LISTENING TO THE TEACHER WHEN YOU CAN LEAP TALL BUILDINGS IN A SINGLE STRIDE?..

GAVIN! GET BACK IN YOUR SEAT!

I'M GONNA BE A SUPER HERO!

OSCAR WILDE

I'M GONNA BE RICH!

I'M GONNA BE POLICE CHIEF!

FORTUNATELY, MY MUM NEVER TOOK DD18... IT'S GOING TO TAKE MORE THAN A LONE RANGER MASK AND A LEOTARD TO DEFEAT GODZOWA..

WE'D BETTER BE QUICK, THOSE SIRENS ARE DRIVING HIM WILD!

KABOO!

NO 13

SHOOFAH!

CRUNCH!

OH SHIT! THERE GOES THE BINGO HALL!

CHRIST!

AAAH!

EEK!

RUN FOR YOUR LIVES!

HELP!

HERE COMES OUR RIDE... ON WITH YOUR HARNESS, ROB ROY...

VEE! VEEE! VE

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ALL EYES TRAINED SKYWARDS AND, WITH ME AT THE CONTROLS AND ROB ROY BOUND SAFELY TO THE A.I.G MK23 ICE SHELF FREEZER UNIT BELOW, OUR HELICOPTER ROSE LIKE A FISHER-PRICE PHOENIX INTO THE FIRMAMENT.....

THIS IS IT, ROB, HOW ARE YOU READING ME!?

ZZZZT CLICK, LIKE A JEFFREY ARCHER NOVEL, MY LOVE... ZZZZZZZT...

RIGHT... IT'S TIME TO BE SERIOUS NOW, WE ONLY GET ONE CHANCE AT THIS... IF YOU MISS, THERE'LL BE NO CRUMPETS AT TEA TIME!

OKEY DOKE!

SWING IT TO THE LEFT A BIT... A BIT MORE..... THAT'S IT! NOW TAKE IT DOWN VERY, VERY SLOWLY...

I HAD EVERY FAITH IN ROB ROY .....

I CAN SEE THE SOFT SPOT! I'M FIRING **NOW!**

TAKE IT VERY EASY... A TAD TO THE RIGHT.. I'M NEARLY THERE!

BULLSEYE! GREAT SHOT, KID, THAT WAS ONE IN A MILL-ION! LETS GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!

NEAT!

KATCHUNC!

STICK!

... NOT ONLY HAD I PUT MY LIFE IN HIS HANDS, BUT THE LIVES OF EVERYONE IN THE EASTERN UNITED STATES.....

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THE LIGHTNING DANCED ACROSS THE EXPENSIVE ROOF-TOPS OF THE CITY UNTIL IT FOUND OUR MARK... THE FREEZER POLE STUCK OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB, AND OUR PROVERBIAL JACK HORNER WAS ABOUT TO HAVE HIS BOLLOCKS BLOWN OFF.....

ZZZZZZZT!

RAAAAH!

ZZZ

!OOOOOOM!

PERFECT! IT WORKED JUST LIKE CLOCKWORK (OR JUST LIKE A CLOCK-WORK EXPLODING GOD MONSTER). ONE THING I DIDNT TELL THE CHIEF WAS THE REASON FOR DRAWING THE MONSTER TO THE CORNER OF SEVENTH AVENUE... THE BUILD-ING ON THE CORNER THAT WAS ALMOST COM-PLETELY DESTROYED BY THE BLAST WAS NONE OTHER THAN McANUS, MELLS AND GOLDSTAR INC.....

NICE!

...FAIRNESS? DECENCY? HOW CAN YOU EXPECT FAIRNESS AND DECENCY ON A PLANET OF SLEEPING PEOPLE?

ONE DAY THESE BASTARDS WILL WAKE UP....

YES...M.M.G INCORPORATED... THE LARGEST PRIVATE DETECTIVE AGENCY IN THE CITY... AND THE AGENCY THAT TRACKED DOWN MY OLDER SISTER ... TRACKED HER DOWN AND SHOT HER DOWN, IN COLD BLOOD....

I'LL WRITE A BOOK, IT WILL BE CALLED...

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NOT A HOAX! _NOT_ A FOETID FAN-BOY FANTASY!

THOSE NAUGHTY A1 BOYS ARE UNLEASHING A BIG, MID-SUMMER DOLLOP OF SIZZLING SAUCE...

THE A1 TRUE LIFE BIKINI CONFIDENTIAL

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COMING THIS JULY!

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GOOD TURN OUT.

HMMM. BETTER THAN I EXPECTED. I GUESS EVEN SMALL PEOPLE MAKE SOME IMPRESSION ON THE WORLD.

the Funeral

Story
Andrew Stickland

Art
Richard Barker

Lettering
Garry Leach

SMALL? THAT'S A RELATIVE TERM. YOU'RE ONLY SMALL IF YOU DON'T THINK BIG.

THAT'S AMATEUR PHILOSOPHY IF I EVER HEARD IT.

ONE OF MY LITTLE VICES.

VICES? I DIDN'T THINK YOU...

YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

POOR LIZ. I WISH THERE WAS SOMETHING I COULD DO. I FEEL SO... I DON'T KNOW, RESPONSIBLE.

IT'S HARDLY YOUR FAULT.

I SUPPOSE NOT. BUT EVEN SO... I'LL MISS HER, YOU KNOW.

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THEY ALWAYS DO. COME ON, LET'S GO. TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH, I HATE FUNERALS.

YOU? HOW CAN YOU HATE FUNERALS?

WHEN YOU'VE SEEN AS MUCH SADNESS AS I HAVE, YOU BEGIN TO WISH YOU COULD GET AWAY FROM IT ONCE IN A WHILE.

YOU'RE RIGHT. I SHOULDN'T STAY. SOMEHOW IT DOESN'T SEEM PROPER.

I HOPE SHE REMEMBERS ME.

DON'T WORRY, I THINK SHE WILL.

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BRICKTOP

STORY AND ART BY
CHRIS SMITH AND GLENN FABRY

EPISODE ONE: LUCY "LOSEY" WALES AND "FAT" ANDY PANKHURST ARE VOMITED OVER BY A COMPLETE STRANGER WHO IS THEN KIDNAPPED.

EPISODE TWO: WE MEET **GEORGE**, A VIVISECTIONIST WHO LIVES WITH LUCY'S MOTHER, AND **XNMOTH OF THRADDD**, AN ALIEN SUPERBEING.

EPISODE THREE: **LUCY**, **ANDY**, **ALEX** AND **NIKKI** ARE CHASED THROUGH WALTON CAR PARK BY THE **WALTON PIG GIRLS** AND **TED BROOKS**, A CARETAKER.

SEE? I NEEDN'T HAVE BOTHERED DRAWING ALL THAT STUFF.

OH WELL, HERE'S **EPISODE FOUR - "BALLS."**

YOU THROW IT, LUCE—PHIL TOOK YOU BOWLING, DIDN'T HE?
EXCEPT MY SODDING PATIENCE. EVERYONE ELSE JUST ROLLS THE BLOODY THING. THEY ENJOY IT THAT WAY.

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...KNOWS SHE'S NO GOOD, BUT ALSO THAT ANDY OWNS THE JOINT...

...AND THAT HE WANTS ALEX TO BOWL BECAUSE IT'S HIS TURN, AND HE REALLY CAN'T GET OUT OF IT.

AGH-'HANDSIGNALS' AND 'SPAGGY'!

HANK MARVIN For JESUS

OKEYDOKEY THEN, BOMBS...

...AWA RRRGH!!

HI, EVERYONE. I DIDN'T KNOW YOU LOT CAME BOWLING...

I DON'T COME BOWLING MYSELF, I CAME WITH THE CHURCH...

SNIF SNIF

PPHUGG! THESE FLOORBOARDS TASTE OF WOOD...

...AND AFTERWARDS WE'LL GO BACK TO THE BIG HALL AND PRAY TOGETHER...

I'M NEVER COMING SWIMMING HERE AGAIN...

CAN WE HAVE OUR BALL BACK, PLEASE?

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ANYWAY, I'VE GOT TO STAY WITH THEM — I'LL SEE YOU ALL AROUND.

NICE CATCH! HI, CATH... WHAT A GIMPOID, EH?

no kidding...

IT'S EASIER BOWLING WITH YOUR HANDS, MATE.

IT'S ALRIGHT— HE SAW GEORGE'S PICTURE OF YOU...

WAH! SHIT!

GROWF!

HANK MARVIN FOR JESUS

HOW THE HELL HAS YOUR DOG SEEN THE INSIDE OF MY MOTHER'S BOYFRIEND'S WALLET?

AH — ISN'T IT GOOD TO SEE SUCH HIGH SPIRITS — EVEN IN LESSER BRETHREN?

YOU'RE LUCY WALES--

GEORGE TOLD ME ALL ABOUT YOU AT THE LAB THE OTHER DAY.

GEORGE **WORKS** FOR YOU? YOU MEAN HE CARVES BUNNIES FOR JESUS?

"LUCY? WHERE DID YOU GO? JESUS, I WAS WORRIED..."

FAT ANDY'S BOWLING

COME IN AND SEE OUR WARES

CLIC

CLIC

I DREW THIS TREE WHILE IN COURT

"OH CATH, YOU WON'T BELIEVE THIS... AFTER WE LEFT ANDY'S PLACE — I HAD TO THINK...

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"I COULDN'T GET OVER THE WAY HANDSIGNALS' DOG BEHAVED...

"SO I WENT HOME AND I WENT THROUGH GEORGE'S BRIEFCASE, AND I FOUND A TAPE...

#197:ERIC

"...AND YOU WON'T BELIEVE THE THINGS I SAW. IT MADE COLIN BLAKEMORE SEEM LIKE ST. FRANCIS. THEY'RE DOING SOME SUPREMACY THING — AND CATH, THEY'RE..."

"STAY WHERE YOU ARE, LUCY. I'LL BE RIGHT OVER. WE SHOULD TALK TO MOTHER — I THINK IT WOULD BE SENSIBLE."

LUCY! HOW COULD YOU BE SO STUPID?

WHAT'S STUPID ABOUT WORRYING ABOUT YOUR MOTHER, MOTHER?

ALRIGHT, I'M SORRY... BUT TO GO THROUGH GEORGE'S THINGS...

MUM — WE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HE WAS BORN-AGAIN...

THERE YOU GO AGAIN! SO BLOODY WHAT? HE'S FAR NICER TO YOU THAN YOUR FATHER EVER WAS!

WELL AT LEAST DAD WASN'T A NEO-NAZI FRUITCAKE PUSHING BUBBLES AND HIS BUDDIES THROUGH A BACON-SLICER IN THE NAME OF RELIGIOUS ENLIGHTENMENT!

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BURGERS HOT D
TEA 2
COFFEE 3
GREASE 2

DOUBLE BACON. TWO. BOTH. ME AND HER.

PERHAPS IF I SQUEEEEZE--

I HAD TO LOSE MY TEMPER, OH SHIT, SHIT, SHIT!

WHY DON'T YOU MOVE IN WITH ME BEFORE YOU GO TO COLLEGE?

BUT ONE MEETS SUCH INTERESTING PEOPLE...

LIFE, EH? CAN YOU MAKE SENSE OF IT?

I'D LIKE TO GIVE YOU A LITTLE SPIRITUAL GUIDANCE...

AND YOU CAN START ON YOUR KNEES, SLUT!

GET OFF HER!

FUCK OFF! FUCK OFF!!

CATH—IT'S HIM!

GEORGE?

YOU STUPID BASTARD, GET IN!

THAT WANKER, CATH—IT'S THE SOD WHO KIDNAPPED THE DUKE OF PUKE!*

AND WHO THE FUCK'S THAT? THE BLOODY WATCHMEN?

WITZMACHER

T.I.T.S.

AUTO. S. BOLLAND

* SEE A1 BOOK ONE.

NEXT: THE FINAL SOLUTION.

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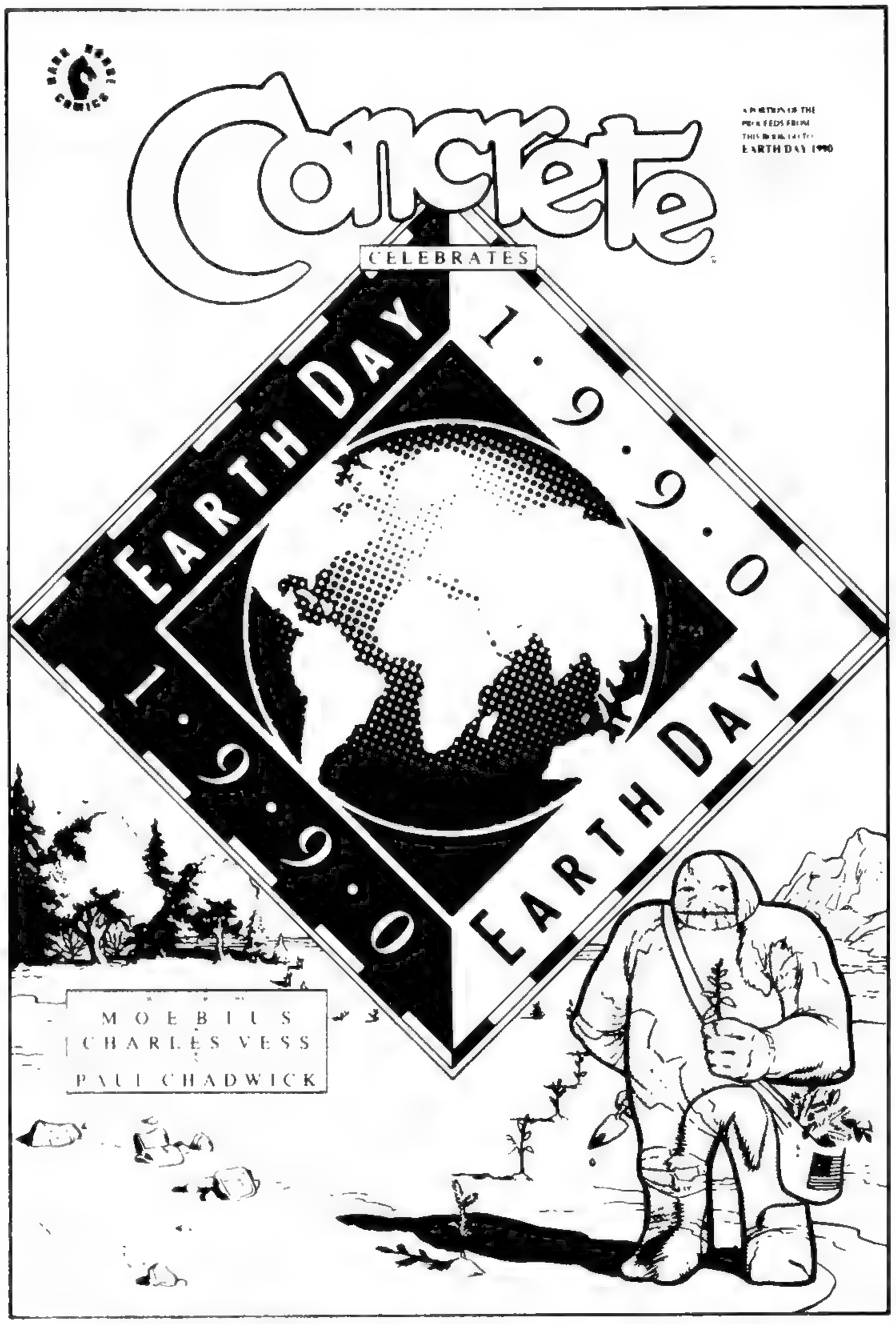

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IN THE HEART OF THE IMPREGNABLE META BUNKER

JODO-MOEBIUS

SOMEWHERE IN THE GREAT TEEMING, BURIED CITY...

TONTO! PLEASE! TELL ME ANOTHER STORY!

ANOTHER STORY?

YES! A REAL ONE! NOT ONE OF THOSE SILLY ROBOTALES...

I UNDERSTAND! ONLY STORIES ABOUT HUMANS CAN TRULY DELIGHT OUR POSITRONIC CIRCUITS...

VERY WELL. I'LL TELL YOU A STORY ABOUT THE META-BARON, MY MASTER, WHO HAS BEEN ABSENT FOR THREE MONTHS, TWELVE DAYS, SIX HOURS, FOUR MINUTES AND FIFTEEN SECONDS STANDARD TIME...

THE META-BARON! HE REALLY IS THE MOST SAVAGELY UNPREDICTABLE HUMAN OF ALL!

HE IS THE GREATEST! HE IS A META-WARRIOR. I LOVE HIM FOR THE BIONIC PART OF HIM!

BUT DON'T MANY OTHER HUMANS HAVE BIONIC PROSTHESES?

YES, BUT THEY'RE JUST REPLACEMENT PARTS. THE META-BARON HAS A BIONIC EAR AND BIONIC LOBES IN THE RIGHT HALF OF HIS BRAIN--AND TOPAZ CHIPS AS WELL!

TOPAZ CHIPS! BUT HOW CAN THAT BE? WAS HE BORN THAT WAY, TONTO?

HA! HA! OF COURSE NOT! MANY ROBOTS FORGET, BUT HUMANS ARE BORN ONE HUNDRED PERCENT FLESH!

IN THE META-BARON'S CASE, IT HAS TO DO WITH WHAT MY ABSENT MASTER ONCE CALLED THE INITIATIC TRADITION OF THE META-WARRIORS. LISTEN! I'LL TELL YOU THE STORY THE WAY I KNOW IT...

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YOU DO NOT CRY?

AND YOU, FATHER, DID YOU CRY DURING YOUR INITIATION?

NO. LIKE YOU, I REMAINED IMPASSIBLE... BUT I COULD NOT PREVENT A TEAR ESCAPING!

THIS IS... BIP! INCREDIBLE! YOU MEAN TO TELL ME THAT THE META-BARON'S OWN FATHER DESTROYED HIS SON'S RIGHT EAR AND BRAIN LOBES?

YES! AND HIS FATHER HAD HIS LEFT HAND CRUSHED BY HIS OWN FATHER BEFORE THAT. SUCH IS THE TRADITION OF THE META-WARRIORS SINCE THE DAWN OF TIME!

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I DON'T LIKE THIS STORY, TONTO! I WONDER IF I WOULDN'T PREFER A ROBOTALE AFTER ALL...

WAIT! THIS IS ONLY THE BEGINNING! IT GETS BETTER!

I HOPE SO! I ALMOST FUSED A CIRCUIT!

I'M BORED WITH THIS SLAUGHTER...

IT HAS BECOME TOO EASY!

HE NO LONGER HAD ANY OPPONENT WORTHY OF HIM...

IT WAS JUST AFTER THE POSTVANDAL AFFAIR ON THE WESTERN CONTINENT...

HIS ONLY CONTACT WITH OTHER HUMANS WERE WAILS OF AGONY AND SCREAMS OF HORROR...

THIS TIME I'M THROUGH, I'M RETURNING TO THE META-BUNKER...

...AND WILL NEVER LEAVE IT AGAIN!

DAYS PASSED IN THE SILENT LONLENESS OF THE IMPREGNABLE META-BUNKER. WHEN SUDDENLY...

NO, TONTO, I'LL NEVER HAVE ANY CHILDREN..

EVER!

I UNDERSTAND, SIR! NO MORE CRUEL INITIATIONS!

CRRR

WHAT'S THAT?

RRRRR

WHO GOES THERE?

RR

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TONTO! QUICK! THE FORCE FIELD!

ALL FIELDS ARE ON, SIR! I DO NOT UNDERSTAND! THIS IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE!

A RAT!?

MY SENSORS INDICATE THAT IT IS AN ILLUSION, SIR!

...YET THE HOLE IN THE FLOOR IS REAL!

LOOK! THE IMAGE VANISHES!

A SILHOUETTE! HO-HO! SOMEONE HAS MANAGED TO INFILTRATE THE META-BUNKER!

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! NO ONE CAN...

TONTO! IS THIS REAL?

YES! MY SENSORS INDICATE THE INTRUDER IS REAL!

WHO ARE YOU?

ANSWER ME, OR I'LL SHOOT!

YOU HAVE NOTHING TO FEAR..

A WOMAN!

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A WO-MAN!

NEVER HAD I SEEN SUCH AN EXPRESSION ON THE META-BARON'S FACE...

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

I AM ANIMAH!

YES... ANIMAH... I HAVE HEARD YOUR NAME BEFORE..

SOMEHOW, I FEEL LIKE I HAVE KNOWN YOU SINCE THE BEGINNING OF TIME.

STAY HERE! DON'T ABANDON ME AGAIN!

MY PLACE IS NOT HERE!

I'M POWERFUL, VERY POWERFUL! I CAN TAKE THIS CITY AND GIVE IT TO YOU I CAN MAKE YOU QUEEN!

ORDER AND I'LL OBEY YOU!

THEN I'LL ORDER YOU TO TAKE THIS CHILD AND BE HIS PROTECTOR, HIS TEACHER AND HIS FATHER!

?!

HIS NAME IS SUNMOON AND HIS HEART IS THAT OF A PERFECT ANDROGYNE. YOU MUST TEACH HIM TO BECOME A META-WARRIOR!

YOU ASK ME TO BE HIS FATHER!?

NEVER!

"ORDER AND I'LL OBEY YOU!" I HAVE DONE SO!

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NO!

?!

i CAN'T ...

BUT YOU TOLD ME THAT YOU WERE POWERFUL...

i WANT TO...

BUT i CANNOT!

THE META-BARON WAS UNRECOGNIZABLE! HE, A MERCILESS KILLER, WAS SUDDENLY LIKE A TIMID YOUNG KNIGHT, PINING FOR HIS BELOVED PRINCESS...

iT iS iMPOS-SIBLE!

WHY, META-BARON? WHY?

ANIMAH, YOU DO NOT REALIZE WHAT YOU ARE ASKING FROM ME... LISTEN AND i'LL TELL YOU! THE DAY OF MY SIXTEENTH BIRTHDAY, MY FATHER ASKED ME TO COME HERE, IN THIS VERY BUNKER, DRESSED IN FULL BATTLE ARMOUR. iT WAS TO BE THE FINAL TEST IN MY INITIATION...

MY SON, THIS IS THE ULTIMATE TEST, WHICH WILL DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU ARE A META-WARRIOR!

iT iS A SIMPLE TEST...

WE WILL FIGHT. EITHER YOU WILL KILL ME, OR i WILL KILL YOU!

BUT, FATHER...

MOEBIUS 6

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I'LL COUNT TO THREE BEFORE STRIKING THE FIRST BLOW!

...TWO...

FATHER! NO!

ONE...

...THREE!

THE BATTLE LASTED FOR TWO DAYS, UNTIL...

MY LANCE...

PIERCED

HIS HEART!

NOW, ANIMAH, YOU UNDERSTAND WHY I CANNOT ACCEPT YOUR CHARGE! IT WOULD BE CONDEMNING THIS CHILD TO DEATH, BECAUSE HE COULD NEVER DEFEAT ME!

YOU ARE WRONG, META-BARON! HE HAS ALREADY DEFEATED YOU!

PULL OUT YOUR DAGGER!

CLIC

TRY TO KILL HIM NOW! STAB HIM IN THE HEART!

WHY NOT!?

WITHOUT THE LEAST HESITATION, THE GREAT WARRIOR PLUNGED HIS WEAPON INTO THE CHILD'S BREAST!

DIE, THEN!

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WHAT!?

IT'S... IT'S... INCRED-IBLE!

HE'S UN-HARMED!

I HEARD HIM!

HE SPOKE! INSIDE ME!

GIVE HIM TO ME!

WHAT DID HE SAY?

HE SAID: "TAKE ME... AND FEED ME."

IT WAS HIS COMMAND...

IT WAS HIS WILL!

SUDDENLY THE FLOOR SHOOK AND SHE VANISHED AS MYSTERIOUSLY AS SHE HAD COME!

GONE WITHOUT A TRACE!

IT'S A REAL TECHNO MYSTERY!!

I WAS ONCE A SOWER OF DEATH. I SHALL BECOME A GUARDIAN OF LIFE! I WILL AWAIT YOUR RETURN, ANIMAH, BECAUSE I KNOW YOU WILL COME BACK!

AND THEN AN EVEN MORE INCREDIBLE THING HAPPENED: THE META-BARON LEFT THE BUNKER TO LOOK FOR..

...A BOTTLE OF MILK!

WHAT A CRAZY STORY! I'LL NEVER UNDERSTAND HUMANS!

TONTO...

PLEASE..

TELL ME ANOTHER STORY!

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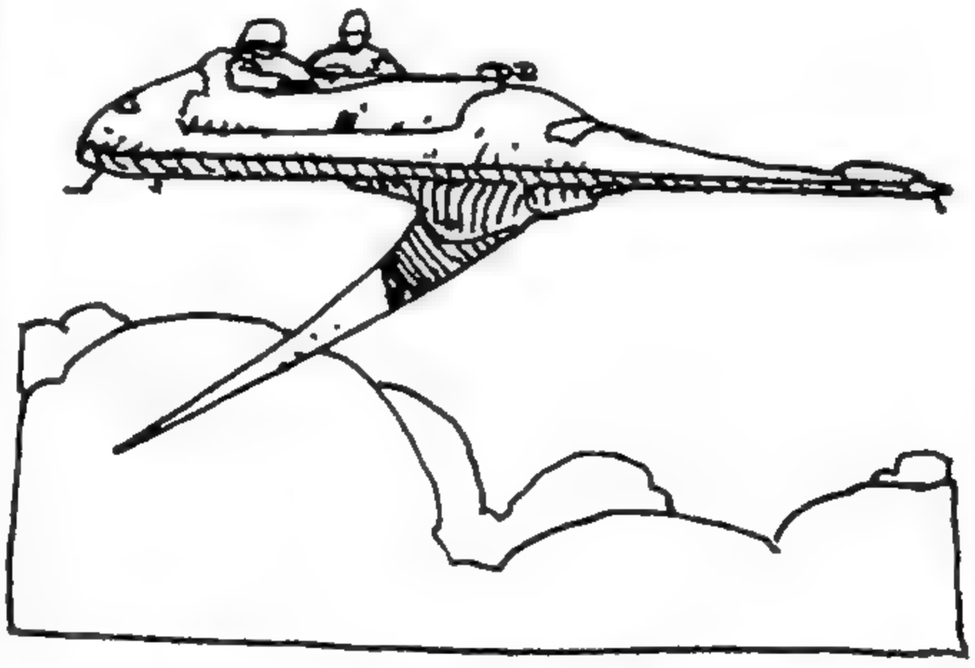
JEAN GIRAUD

CARNET 3

HOW CAN ONE BE BORN PAINLESSLY, ON 13th JANUARY 1984 TOWARDS THE END OF THE CHRISTIAN ERA IN URANTIA. THE MOST POWERFUL AND EVOLVED COUNTRY IN THE WEST, AT THE CORNER OF WESTMINSTER AND PACIFIC, SITTING NEXT TO A BLACK GUITAR-PLAYER WEARING A

MAN INHERITED THE PLAINS AND THE HILLS, THE WIND, THE RIVERS AND THE FLAMES. HE ACQUIRED LAWS, KNOWLEDGE AND A WAY OF LIFE, A SOCIETY WHICH CRADLES HIM, SURROUNDS HIM, CARESSES HIM OR PUNISHES HIM. HE IMAGINED A WORLD OF SPIRITS, OF SOULS, OF GHOSTS, A PHANTOM WORLD WHICH WEIGHS ON HIS ACTIONS AND IN WHOSE GOOD GRACES IT IS IMPORTANT TO BE.
MEN REACT TOWARDS THEIR NATURAL HERITAGE BY CREATING STATES, TOWARDS THEIR SOCIAL HERITAGE BY CREATING HOMES, AND TOWARDS THEIR SPIRITUAL HERITAGE BY CREATING CHURCHES.

THAT EXPLAINS IT ALL!



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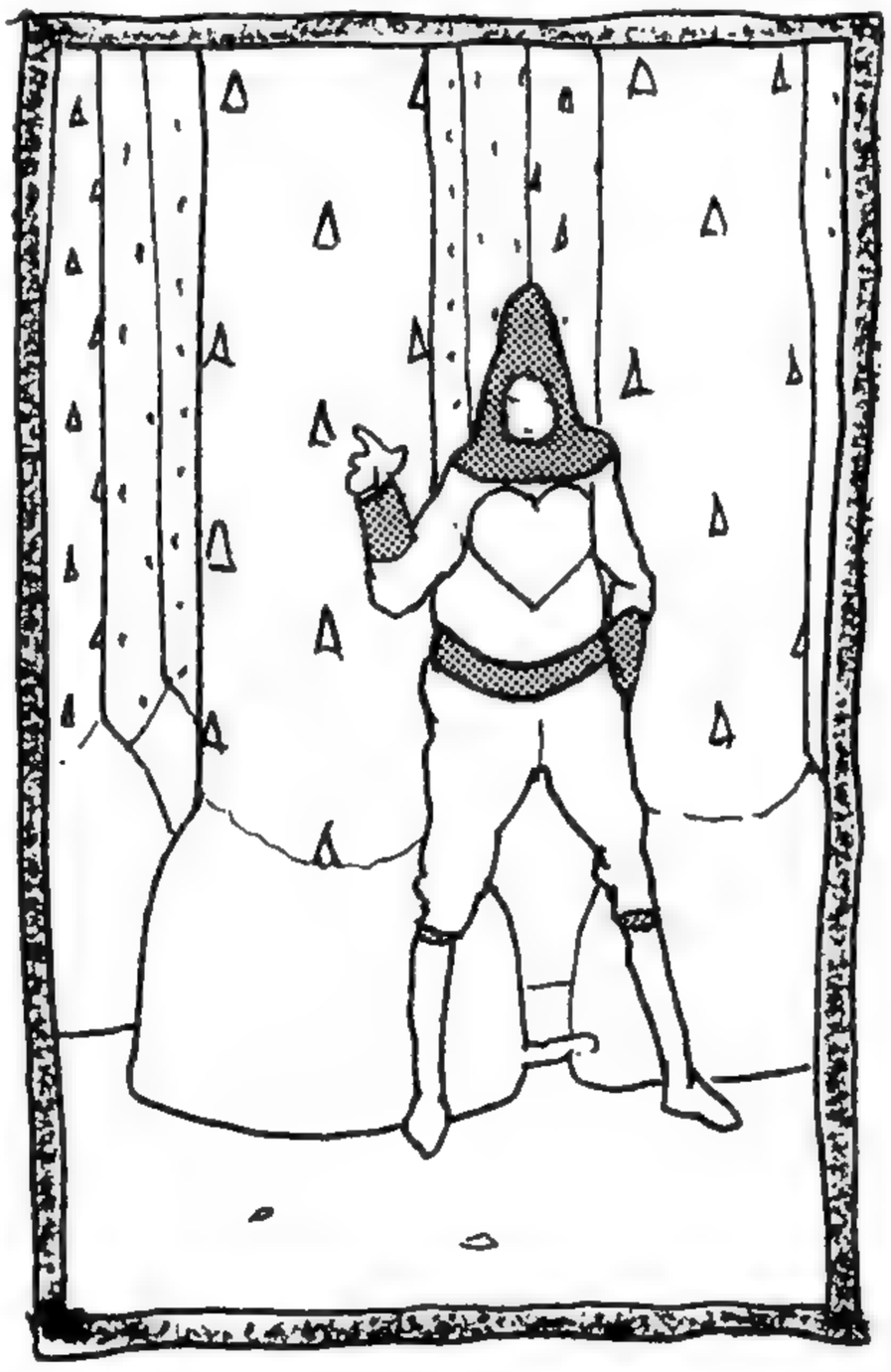
HAT WITH A FEATHER IN IT, WAITING FOR A BUS GOING TO SANTA MONICA? HOW MANY MORE 13th JANUARYS DO I HAVE TO LIVE? IT IS NOT AN IMPORTANT QUESTION, ESPECIALLY SINCE THE BUS IS COMING.



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JEAN GIRAUD

M

LOOKING
BEYOND THE HORIZON
FOR A BETTER WORLD

AT THE TURN OF THE INTERNAL THE STAR WHISPERS TO ME SOFT BUT OPEN WORDS...

AND I BECOME COMPLETELY DRAWN ON THE STRING OF ETERNAL TRUTH ON THE BOW OF DIVINE LOVE.

DO NOT MAKE A MISTAKE! THIS IS

21.1

NO AIMLESS, PURPOSELESS WALK. M.

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ALL WAS GOING WELL IN THE KINGDOM. I RECEIVED MESSAGES WHICH I PASSED ON MODESTLY. IT MADE ME HAPPY, SO HAPPY THAT, IMPERATIVELY BUT SPONTANEOUSLY, I HAD TO CRY

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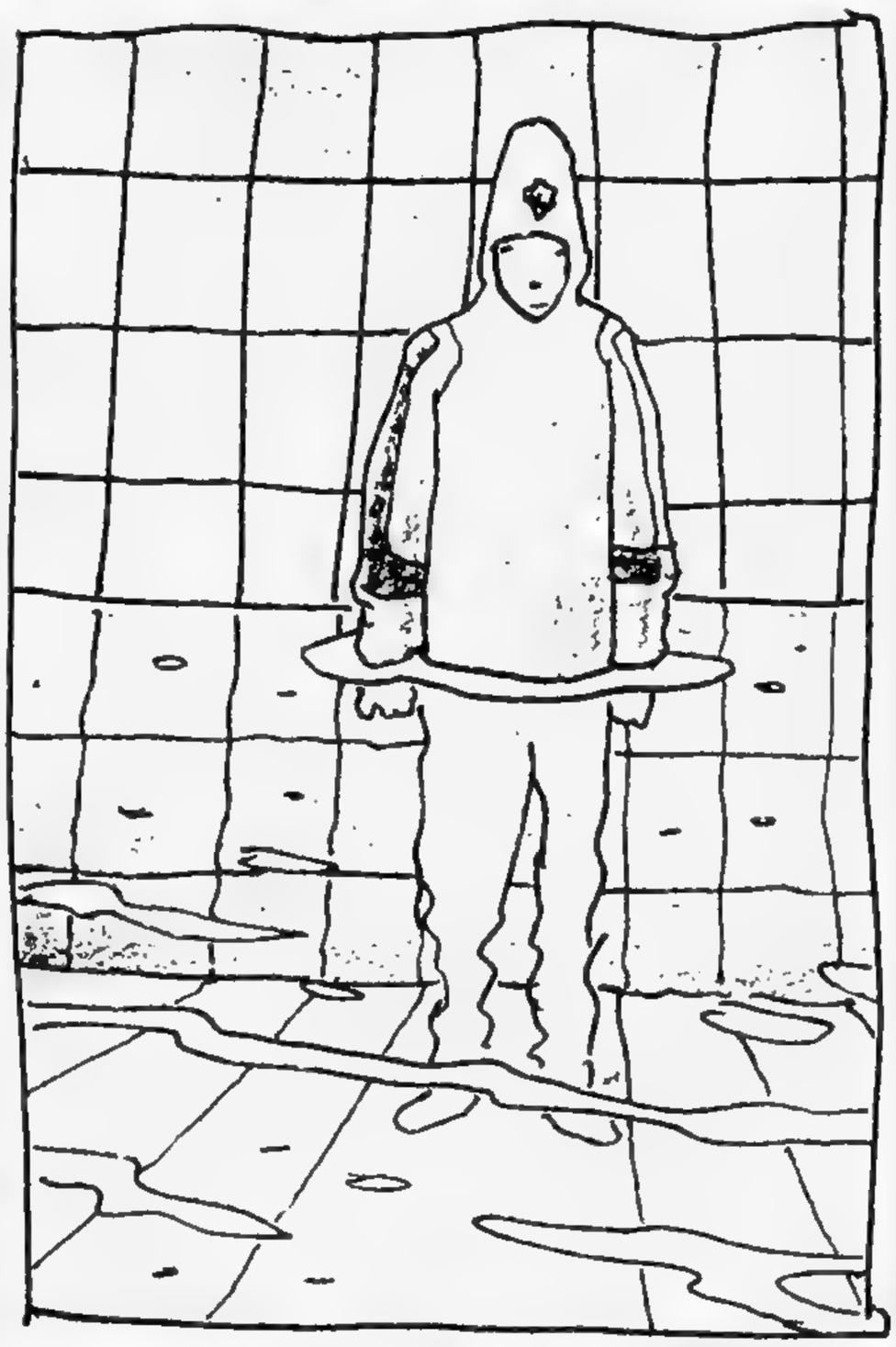
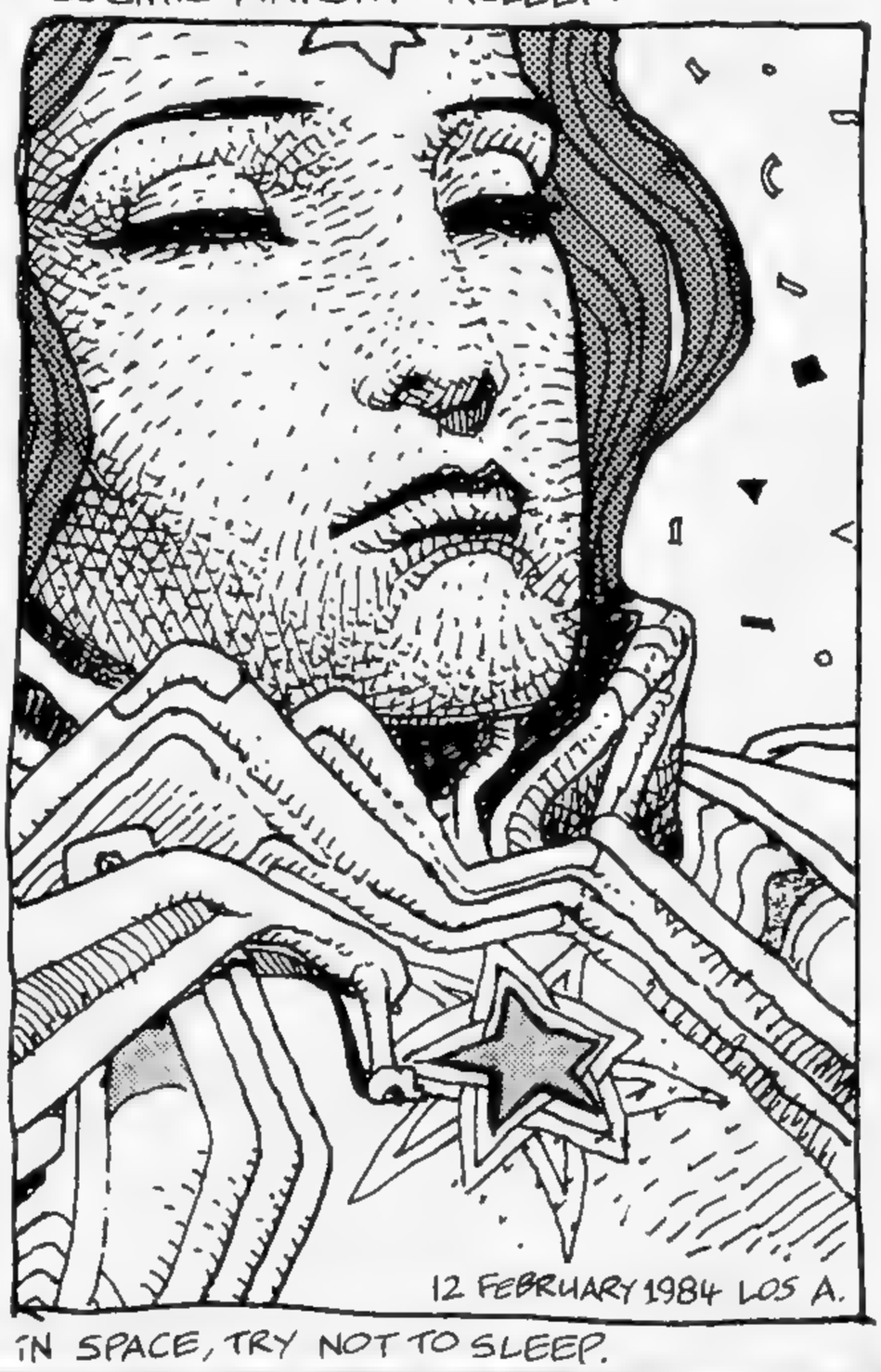


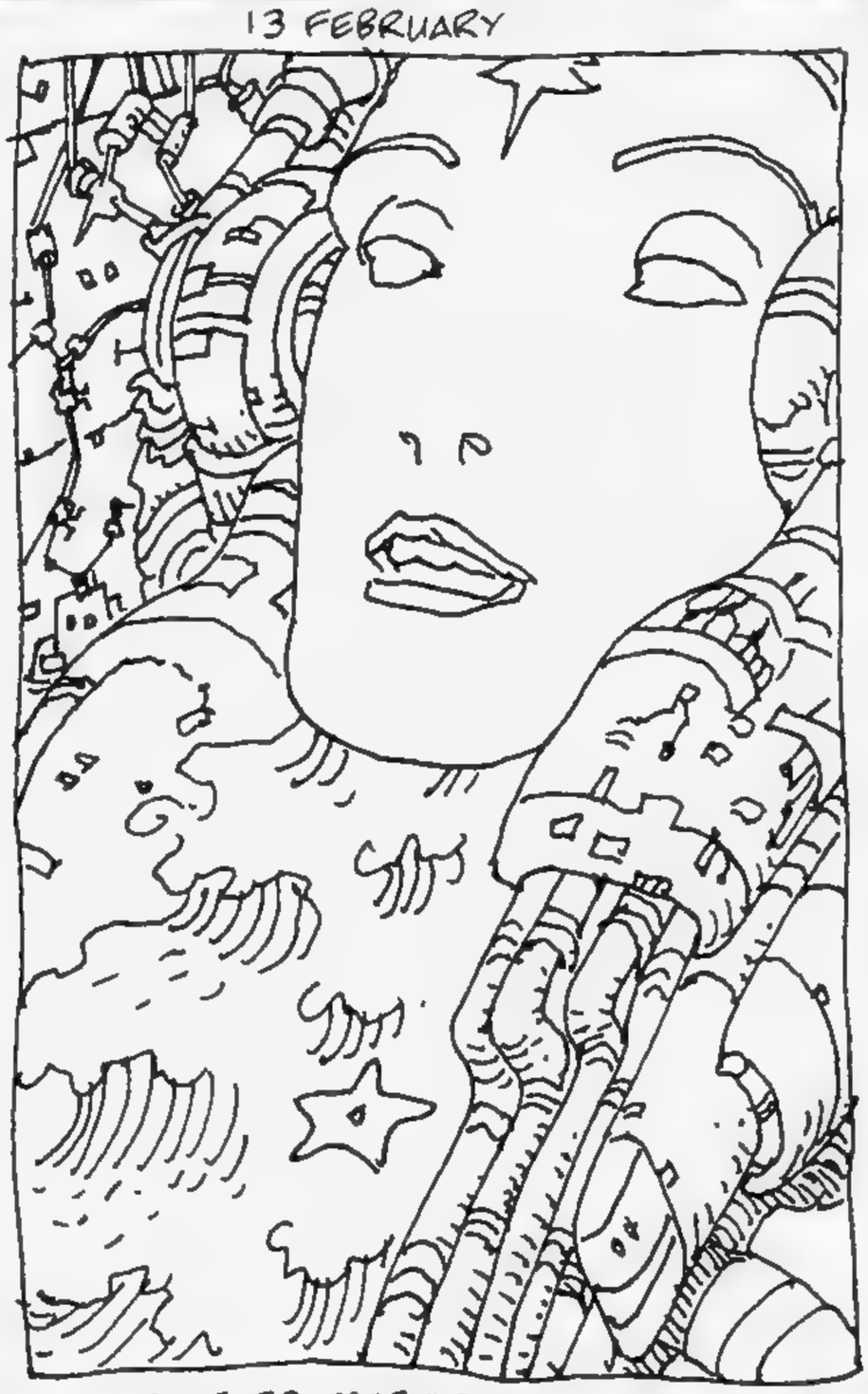
ALONE ON THE PRAIRIE

"COSMIC KNIGHT" ASLEEP.



IN SPACE, TRY NOT TO SLEEP.

13 FEBRUARY



ON THE OTHER SIDE "ROBOTALMA" LAUGHS.

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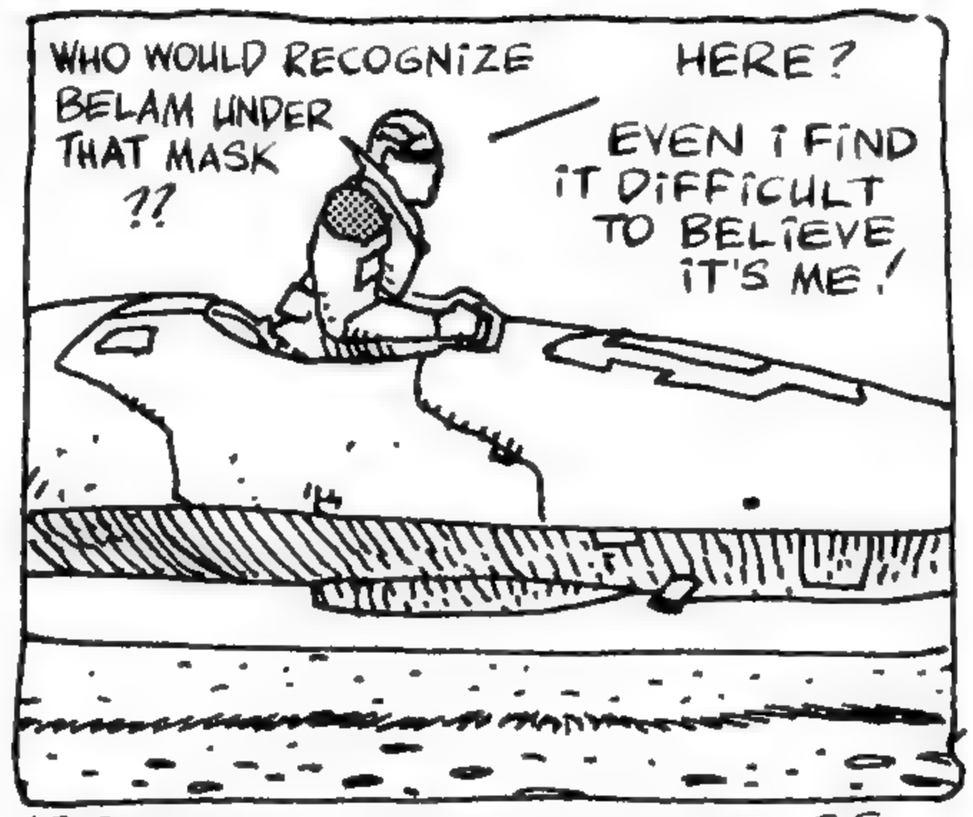
JEAN GIR

THE ADVENTURES OF BELAM ON OPHELIA IN 1984.

I

PACIFIC PUBLISHING



AT THE CONTROLS OF HIS PSYCOPTER, THE MYSTERIOUS RICH STRANGER, STILL WEARING A MASK, TRAVELS ACROSS THE BURNING DESERTS OF OPHELIA, THE SUPRASTRANGE PLANET...

HE FALLS ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL!

JEAN GIR

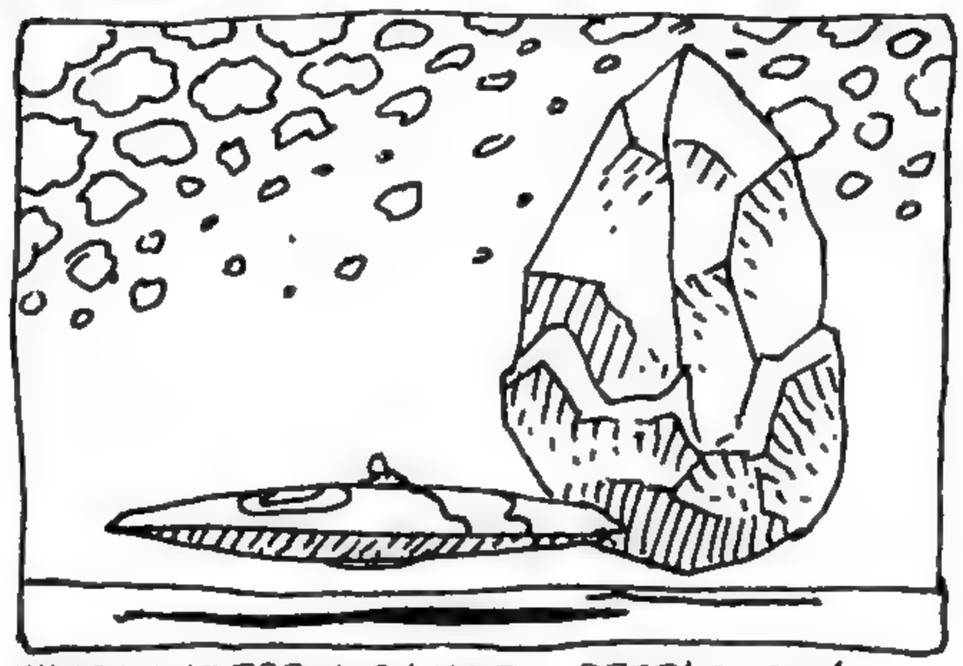
THE EXTRAORDINARY ADVENTURES OF

BELAM

ON A PLANET SELECTED AT RANDOM (OPHELIA) IN THE YEAR 1984

II

PACIFIC PUBLISHING



WATCH OUT FOR VERY HARD OBSTACLES!

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JEAN GIR

THE STORY
OF BELAM
ON OPHELIA (1984)

III

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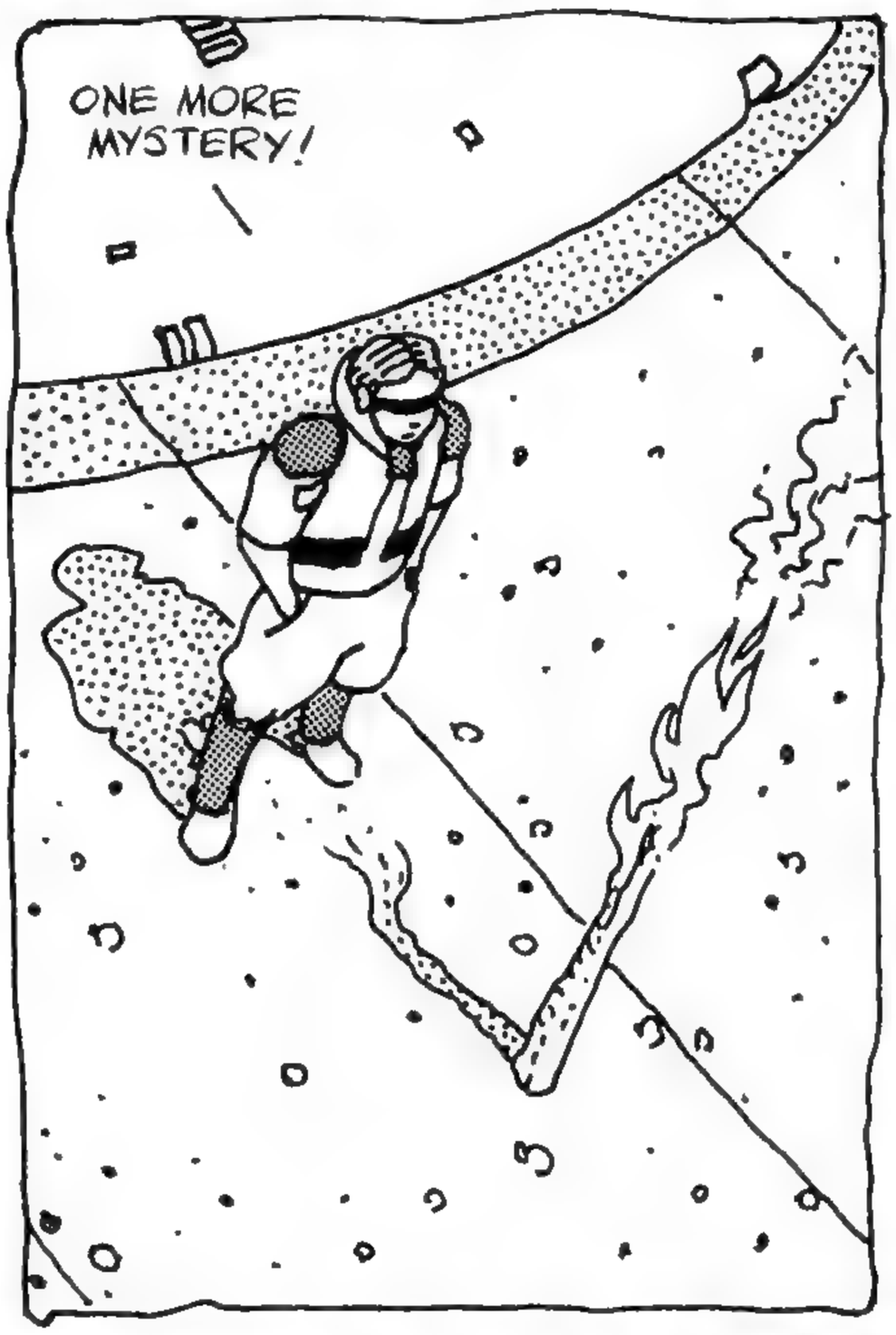

JEAN GIR

BELAM

ADVENTURES
1984
OPHELIA.

IV

PACIFIC PUBLISHING

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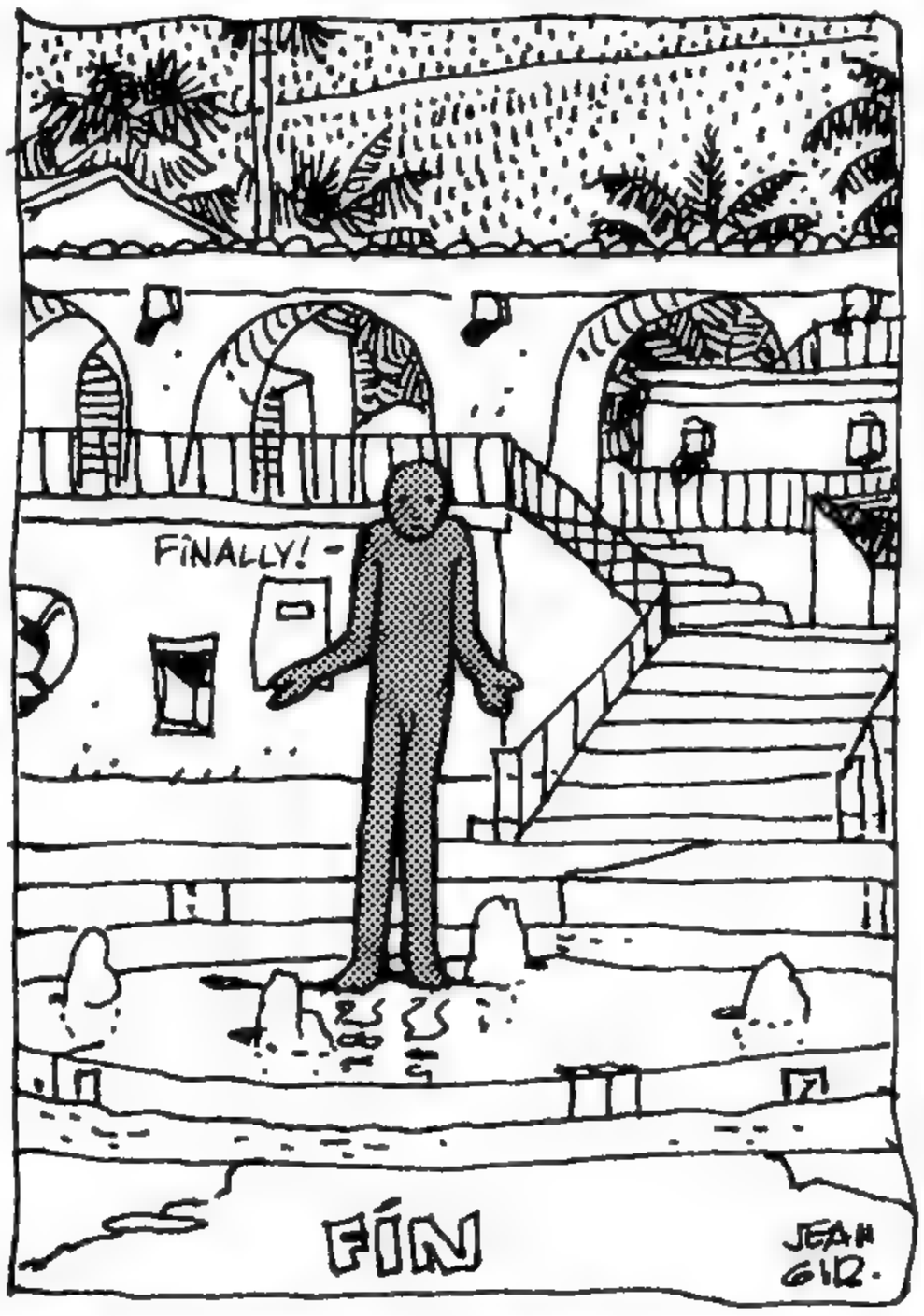
JEAN GIR

1984
BELAM
OPHELIA
V

PACIFIC
PUBLISHING

LATER IN PARADISE...



FIN

JEAN GIR.

I HAVE A LOT OF PROBLEMS SATISFYING THE HUNGERS OF THE BEAST AND QUENCHING ITS THIRST.

A MAN GRAPPLING WITH HIS DEMONS.

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MOEBIUS CIRCA '74

MR GIRAUD, WHY HAVE YOU CONTINUED DRAWING BLUEBERRY FOR SUCH A LONG TIME?

HMMM...

BECAUSE IT'S A COMMERCIAL SERIES. ALSO BECAUSE IT'S TAKEN ME A GOOD EIGHT YEARS TO BE HAPPY WITH MY STYLE.

SO, YOU STILL ENJOY DOING IT?

VERY MUCH SO.

ESPECIALLY SINCE I NOW HAVE A LOT OF INPUT INTO CHARLIER'S SCENARIOS (SCENARII?)

ARE YOU TELLING US YOU'RE MAKING CHANGES TO CHARLIER'S SCENARIOS (RII)?

TELL THE TRUTH NOW!

I DO!! ESPECIALLY SINCE THE *LOST DUTCHMAN'S MINE*. I LOVED THE CHARACTER OF LUCKNER. ALSO, THAT BOOK BROUGHT BROUGHT BACK MEMORIES OF ANOTHER I'D READ, ON THE SAME THEME, BY J.O. CURWOOD.

SINCE THEN, I CAN'T STOP MAKING CHANGES!

AND PLAGIARISING, MAYBE?

DO YOU HAVE A LIGHT, NUMA?

DON'T TRY TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT NOW!

QUESTIONS BY NUMA SADOUL, AN HONEST AND INTRANSIGENT COMICS REPORTER
ANSWERS BEAUTIFULLY INTERPRETED AND RENDERED BY MOEBIUS.
TRANSLATION, ADAPTATION AND ASSORTED FOOTNOTES BY RANDY AND JEAN-MARC LOFFICIER, WHO ARE NOT TO BLAME FOR THIS.
LETTERING FORGED BY WOODROW PHOENIX, SUPER ADAPTOID.

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WHY DID YOU LOVE LUCKNER SO MUCH?

HIS DEEP HUMANITY? HA!

NO, IT'S JUST THE KIND OF CHARACTER I LIKE. OLD AND SCARRED BY LIFE ENOUGH TO BE EASY TO DRAW (CARICATURE?) YET YOUNG ENOUGH TO STILL BE DANGEROUS IN *THE LOST DUTCHMAN'S MINE*, THERE ARE THREE SUCH "DEADLY OLD MEN" LUCKNER, M°CLURE AND WALLY (PLAYED BY SPENCER TRACY!)

AND DID YOU PLAGIARISE.. ER.. PAY HOMAGE TO THAT OTHER BOOK, THE ONE BY CURWOOD?

YOU MUST UNDERSTAND! IT WAS THE FIRST REAL BOOK I EVER READ. THAT *BLUEBERRY* STORY BROUGHT BACK IMAGES AND EMOTIONS THAT HAD BEEN ENGRAVED IN MY MIND SINCE I WAS TWELVE!

YOU STARTED READING RATHER LATE!

DIDN'T YOU READ BOOKS BEFORE THEN?

NO, ONLY COMICS. *DONALD, TARGA, GARRY, ALAIN LA FOUTRE*, THE ITALIAN SUPERBOY, PLUS A LOT I'M FORGETTING RIGHT NOW.

HOW DEPLORABLE!

WHERE DID YOU DO ALL THIS?

IN FONTENAY S/BOIS.

AND WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN LIVING THESE PAST TWO YEARS?

ER... IN FONTENAY S/BOIS.

NEED I SAY MORE? O.K. LET'S MOVE ON. WHAT DO YOU FEEL READING ALL THOSE GRAPHIC STORIES BROUGHT YOU?

(*) IN A WHISPER

IT'S UNBELIEVABLE!

L'IL JERK!

GRAPHIC STORIES MY FOOT! I READ COMIC BOOKS! HEY! WHY IS THAT GUY LOOKING AT ME THAT WAY?

ASSHOLE!

DON'T MIND HIM!* THEN?

THEN, WHEN I MANAGE A TRADE FOR A PILE OF COMICS, I GO LAY ON MY BED ON MY STOMACH AND...

ON YOUR STOMACH?

YES. I READ THEM ALL, THEN I GO TO THE KITCHEN AND I TRACE THE PANELS ON THE TABLE. MAYBE WHEN I'M BIG, I'LL BECOME A... ER...

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YES, GO ON. WHAT DO YOU WANT TO BE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

PLEASE!

I WANT TO BE A KNIFE SHARPENER, BECAUSE OF ALL THE PRETTY SPARKS THEY MAKE!

?

ER... IN SCHOOL, HOW DID IT GO?

BAH! I WAS ALWAYS AMONG THE LAST! I HAD THE UNFORTUNATE HABIT OF PROVOKING MY TEACHERS THROUGH INSOLENCE AND TACTLESSNESS. ACTUALLY, I CONTINUE TO DO SO WITH THEIR COUNTERPARTS.

IT'S LIKE AN INSTINCT!

WHAT DO YOU THINK OF GIRAUD?

AN EGOIST!

PRETENTIOUS!

AN ASSHOLE!

A GUY WHO'S COMPLETELY... ER...

WEAK!

CAN'T MAKE UP HIS MIND.

A WANKER.

A LITTLE JERK!

A WHORE.

MR GIRAUD! HEY! MR GIRAUD!

ASK HIM TO TELL YOU ABOUT HIS FATHER!

MY DAD IS A CHARMING FELLOW, WHOM I MET ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS. IN SOME RESPECTS, HE REMINDS ME OF THE CHARACTER PLAYED BY JULES BERRY IN "THE CRIME OF MR LANGE," WITHOUT HAVING HIS MONSTROUS PERSONALITY.

AND YOUR MOTHER?

MY MOM REMARRIED LATER... HE WAS THE SWORD-FIGHTING CHAMPION OF MEXICO.

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DO YOU REMEMBER THE FIRST DRAWINGS THAT YOU SAW?

NO!

WELL, YES. IT WAS GUSTAVE DORÉ, RIOU AND OTHER TURN OF THE CENTURY ENGRAVINGS.

DID YOU ALREADY DRAW THEN?

PLOUF

YES, BUT ONLY COMICS!

HAVE YOU KEPT A COPY OF THEM?

OF COURSE! THERE THEY ARE! CAREFULLY FILED IN THAT CHEST!

SO?

THEY'RE INCREDIBLY AWFUL! I'M GOING TO DUMP THEM ALL BACK IN THE WATER WITH A PAIR OF CONCRETE BOOTS!

WHEN I WAS 16, I DREW A FAIRLY LONG STORY THAT TOOK PLACE IN AFRICA. ONE DAY, I TOOK IT TO MY SCHOOL, THE *APPLIED ARTS*, TO FLAUNT MY STUFF, BUT IT WAS STOLEN.

IT WASN'T EVEN FINISHED! TOUGH!

SERVES YOU RIGHT!

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HOW DID YOU MANAGE TO GO TO THE APPLIED ARTS?

I GOT OFF AT THE REPUBLIQUE STATION!

IS IT ALSO WHERE YOU LEARNED TO SAY SILLY THINGS?

NO, SERIOUSLY.

O.K. AFTER FAILING AT TRADITIONAL SCHOOL, I PASSED TWO TECHNICAL SCHOOL ENTRANCE EXAMS FOR ESTIENNE AND THE APPLIED ARTS. I CHOSE THE APPLIED ARTS BECAUSE THEY WERE CLOSER TO HOME. I LEARNED SOME PRETTY AMAZING THINGS THERE, LIKE HOW TO CARVE AN L-SQUARE OUT OF AN EBONY BLOCK, HOW TO INSULT PEOPLE WITHOUT THEM REALIZING IT, AND THE ART OF SLEEPING WITH ONE'S EYES OPEN!

NO. THAT CAME ELSEWHERE AND LATER, THOUGH IN A WAY, IT'S THE RESULT OF A LIFETIME OF TRAINING. HOWEVER, IT WAS AT THE APPLIED ARTS THAT I DEVELOPED THAT FAMOUS BRUSH STROKE, KNOWN AS "BUTTERFLY STROKE," WHICH HAS MADE ME FAMOUS IN THIS LATTER PART OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

YOU STARTED IN COMICS RIGHT AFTER SCHOOL?

YES. RIGHT AWAY I BECAME ONE OF THE SO-CALLED "YOUNG HOPES" OF COMICDOM. OF COURSE, FIRST I HAD TO FIGHT MY OWN NATURAL TENDENCY TOWARDS VANITY, BUT I TOTALLY SURRENDERED TO IT AFTER A FEW HOURS. IT WAS AT SCHOOL THAT I MET J.C. MEZIERES, WHOSE HOT KISSES I'LL NEVER FORGET, AND PATRICK MALLET, WHO REFUSED TO LISTEN TO ANYONE.*

*ARTIST MALLET IS ACTUALLY HEARING-IMPAIRED.

MR GIRAUD, I DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU CAN MAKE JOKES ABOUT SOMEONE'S HANDICAP. IT'S IN SUCH BAD TASTE!

HERE'S MY ANSWER!

LET'S NOT HAVE A FIGHT, O.K.? INSTEAD, TELL US ABOUT YOUR EARLY WORK FOR HARAKIRI?

I WASN'T VERY RICH AT THE TIME, AND IT DIDN'T PAY VERY MUCH, BUT I ENJOYED THE FREEDOM I GOT. ASK ANDRÉ DETON WHO KNEW ME WELL THEN IF YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME. ISN'T THAT THE TRUTH, ANDRÉ?

MEET MY FRIEND ANDRE DETON, ALSO KNOWN AS THE FLYING COWBOY!

TELL HIM TO STOP BEING SILLY, FOR GOD'S SAKE!

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JIJE WAS YOUR TEACHER AT THE TIME?

YES! I WAS IN LOVE WITH EACH OF HIS DAUGHTERS. WE USED TO GO FOR LONG WALKS IN THE FOREST AND PICK MUSHROOMS, WHICH WE THEN ATE IN AN OMLETTE AT 4 P.M. OR THEREABOUTS. AND WE DID THIS SEVERAL TIMES!

IT'S AROUND THAT TIME THAT I BEGAN GIVING LECTURES ON COMIC ART AT THE VINCENNES UNIVERSITY...

NUMA, THAT'S NOT CORRECT! THAT WAS MUCH LATER!

SHUT UP! LET HIM SPEAK! *

* MEZZO VOCE

YOU STOPPED WORKING ON *BLUEBERRY* FOR A SHORT WHILE. WHY?

BECAUSE I WANTED TO OPEN A POOL ROOM WITH THREE X-RATED MOVIE THEATERS IN THE CELLAR.

I HAVE THE MONEY, BUT I'M WAITING TO BE BETTER AT SHOOTING POOL.

ARE YOU DOING WHAT YOU REALLY WANT TO DO?

YES. I DON'T HAVE TO LISTEN TO ANYONE ELSE. JUST LIKE PATRICK MALLET.

CAREFUL ABOUT THAT!

I MYSELF VERY MUCH ADMIRE YOUR ORIGINAL APPROACH TO COLORING. COULD YOU TELL US MORE?

I'M AFRAID I CAN'T ANSWER THAT QUESTION BECAUSE IT WOULD THREATEN TOO MANY POWERFUL INTERESTS AND I'VE GOT TO BE CAREFUL WHAT I SAY.

TELL US ABOUT WORKING FOR THE MOVIES, MR GIRAUD!

THE MOVIES...YES...

WORKING FOR THE MOVIES IS WORMERLAND VALLE BAR / ROJURE DAC, ASTROVEN DAC. PIERCE WAHOO, NUOC!

???

ER... CAN YOU TELL US WHAT HAPPENED AT *PILOTE* DURING MAY '68?

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HOW WOULD I KNOW? AT THE TIME, I WAS UNDERGOING DETOXIFICATION IN A SMALL, PRIVATE INSTITUTION NEAR ROUBAIX, WHERE ALL THE NURSES HAD ENORMOUS BOOBS, SO IT WAS THE LAST THING ON MY MIND.

HE'S GETTING SILLY AGAIN. WHAT CAN WE DO? *

WAIT! I'VE GOT AN IDEA*! TELL US WHAT YOU ARE THINKING ABOUT NOW, MR GIRAUD.

* MEZZO VOCE!!!

I DON'T THINK, AT LEAST NOT WHEN I SPEAK, AS I'M SURE YOU'VE NOW REALIZED. SINCE THE BEGINNING OF THIS INTERVIEW, I'VE NOTICED A SLOW DEGRADATION OF MY THOUGHT PROCESSES, AS WELL AS OTHER SEMANTIC TROUBLES, WHICH MIGHT EVEN BE MORE SERIOUS!

ON THE OTHER HAND, MY COMICS WORK IS PERFECTLY PLANNED AND TOTALLY UNDER MY CONTROL.

ARE YOU, OR HAVE YOU EVER BEEN IN ANALYSIS?

NOT SINCE MY LAST ESCAPE!

WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS NOW? START YOUR OWN MAGAZINE? WRITE A BOOK?

MY OWN MAGAZINE? BUT I ALREADY OWN *PILOTE* WHICH I SECRETLY BOUGHT IN 1947. A BOOK? MAYBE SOMEDAY I'LL WRITE ONE ON SHIRLEY TEMPLE. SOMETHING VERY UNHEALTHY.

THE MAD JABBER'S STRUCK AGAIN!

WILL YOU CONTINUE USING THE PSEUDONYM "MOEBIUS"?

I'D LOVE TO, BUT THAT GUY'S BECOMING TOO GREEDY. FROM NOW ON, I'LL SIGN ALL MY WORK *EPHRAIM ZIMBALIST III*. IT LOOKS CLASSIER, NO?

ISN'T WRITING YOUR OWN STORIES RATHER STRESSFUL?

NOT AT ALL! WHAT I FIND STRESSFUL IS NOT BEING ABLE TO WRITE ONE'S OWN STORIES!

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SINCE YOU LIKE THE MOVIES SO MUCH, DON'T YOU FEEL LIKE MAKING A FILM?

NOT WHILE ACTORS REFUSE TO SHOOT AT EACH OTHER WITH REAL BULLETS!

MUSIC IS VERY IMPORTANT FOR YOU. LET'S TALK ABOUT IT...

OKAY! FINE BY ME! YOU START!

ER... NO... *YOU* START. WHAT KIND OF...

NO WAY! IT WAS *YOUR* IDEA, SO YOU'LL BE THE ONE WHO STARTS.

OKAY. I REALLY LIKE SARITA MONTIEL'S LAST ALBUM. THE ONE WITH A BUNCH OF COMPLETELY RUSTED SURGICAL INSTRUMENTS ON THE COVER.

I FIND SARITA MONTIEL IMPOSSIBLE TO LISTEN TO, AND THAT ALBUM IS GARBAGE. PURE SHIT!

AH? WELL. DO YOU READ ANYTHING BESIDES S.F.?

WHEN I THINK I WAS AFRAID OF THAT GUY BEFORE!

POLITICS... WHAT DO YOU THINK? WHERE DO YOU STAND?

MOSTLY ON MY OWN TWO FEET, LEANING TOWARDS THE LEFT. I'M A VERY DANGEROUS LIBERAL.

DID YOU EVER DRAW WHILE SMOKING POT?

NO, BECAUSE YOU GET INTOXICATED AND THEN YOU CAN'T STOP DRAWING!

THAT'S IT! WE'RE FINISHED!

ALREADY?

FIN.

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Story: R.J.M. Lofficier
Illustrations: Steve Whitaker

THE LAST

Said the Merchant: "Did you call me last night?"

I: "No."

A silence.

I stand, a pale and silent wraith at the ochre feet of the Great Sphinx of Gizeh. A terrible choice for a party, really.

Joe — who is not human — comes to us. He is a tall, sun-glassed creature who fancies the idiotic dress of the ancient Hell's Angels.

"Want to score, Man?" he asks us. More of his anachronistic pitter-patter. What a bore.

"No, thank you very much." The Merchant.

"Why, no, thanks." Me. Properly contemplative.

"Nevermore." The Raven.

Joe starts smoking. Big, blue puffs float up towards the stars and down again. He sits on one. "What are you talking about, Man?"

Joe calls everybody "Man". But then, we are and he is not. What he is is something else. Come to think of it, I don't think they even have use for names on his planet.

Diogenes, who until now had been busy romancing Estrella, answers, "The Merchant asked Shroud whether or not he called him last night."

"Which I did not," I add. "Besides, I try to keep my contacts with Imperium agents as minimal as possible."

Asks the Merchant, definitely upset, "Who are you calling an Imperium agent?"

Answers Joe, "Who else, fatso?"

Remarks Diogenes, "They used to be less...obvious. I remember a time when you couldn't spot one for days."

Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore".

The Great Sphinx smiles his same, irritating, bird-swallowing smirk. The Merchant

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PARTY ON EARTH

looks worried. One wonders why the Galactic Imperium keeps sending agents to Earth. And second-rate ones at that. This party is fast turning out to be a bore. I also don't like the way they fixed up its nose. I mean, the Sphinx's.

"Maybe Glocom made a mistake," I say, trying bravely to rescue this conversation from utter banality.

More silence. Courageously, I persevere.

"After all, it has been operating for a fairly long time..."

"Nevermore".

The Raven again. Who invited that awful bird anyway? I hate these DNAberrations. Call me old fashioned, but what is wrong with the traditional human shape? Estrella calls it another of my atavistic hang-ups. She also points out that my kind of satin skin wasn't developed until the Third Interregnum. So what? Consistency is the hobgoblin of micro-minds, as I always say.

I don't know. This is all so boring.

"Bugger off, birdie", Joe says. "Your Glocom machine is screwing up all over the place, Man. Running things better? Ha! Better, schmetter! What about your Japan?"

Diogenes: "A small loss. Nothing compared to..."

Joe: "So, now you can chat and dance, and drink and party, all day and all night. Get whatever you want and create it if it doesn't exist. Tap the energies of your own star and reshape man and beast alike. Mould things into the forms you fancy. But to what end? There's no longer a Ulysses or a Homer..."

"You didn't phone me, did you?" The Merchant to Diogenes.

"...An Einstein or a Gudarsky..."

"But we're happy," I say, meekly.

"It couldn't have been you, could it?" The Merchant to the Raven, who shrugs.

"Happy? Those who aren't happy are ill. Those who are ill are cured. But what happens

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to those who can't be cured?"

I think of the Farm and keep my eyes on the Sphinx, silent, contemplative, floating fifteen feet off its crystal pedestal. How can I answer Joe? He has followed Mankind since we were trying to reach the edge of the world. We're his pet subject. Lying would be pointless. Instead, I erase the Sphinx's nose and restore it to the way it used to be. Imperfect.

"I wonder who could have called me in the middle of the night?" the Merchant mutters.

"I did."

We all look around.

"Here," the omnitor says.

The Merchant looks at the small, silvery ball. "Yes? Who is this?"

"This is Glocom. I'd very much like to speak to you. In private."

The Merchant apologizes and blinks out. I wonder what Glocom wants to discuss with him. Then, I remember that the Merchant is an Imperium agent.

Joe lifts his glasses and opens an eye. Definitely not human.

"I wonder what'll come out of that," he says. The tone is that of one who already knows.

Diogenes materializes some nova drinks. "Why are you both so melancholy? This is a lovely night. The stars are shining and..."

"Glocom. The Merchant. Do you think it'll sell us?" I ask.

"... the ladies are beautiful..."

"No glorious defeat shall come to give you hope," answers Joe.

"...and we shall dance 'til morning rises."

"Nevermore," quoth the Raven.

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no beating about the bush!

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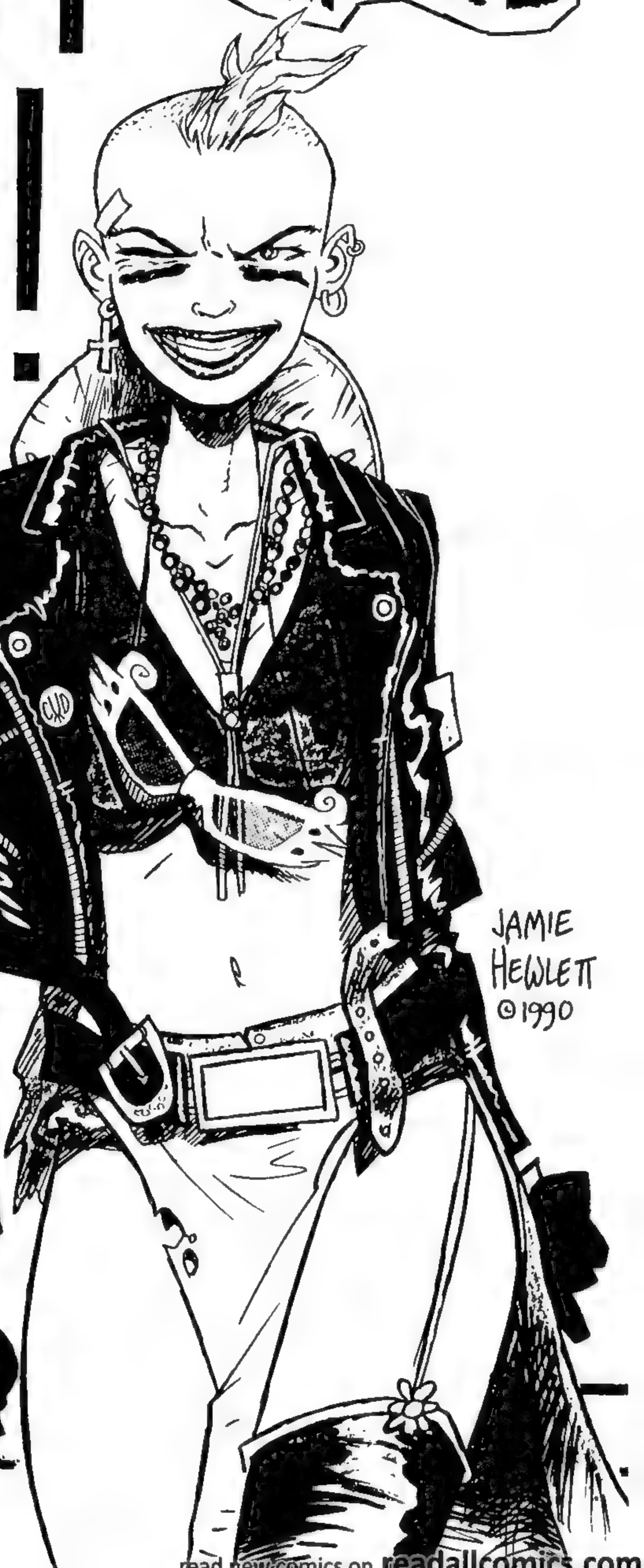
PARTY TIME!

TANK GIRL



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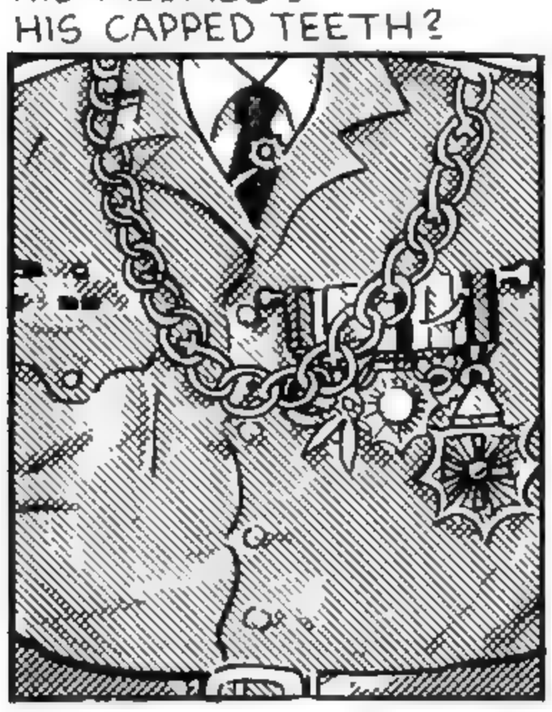
THE LAST BEATING'S DAMAGED MY BRAIN. I CAN'T THINK. I CAN'T REMEMBER MY MIDDLE NAMES OR HOW TO PROGRAMME A ROBOT... OR EVEN THE TASTE OF TOMATOES.

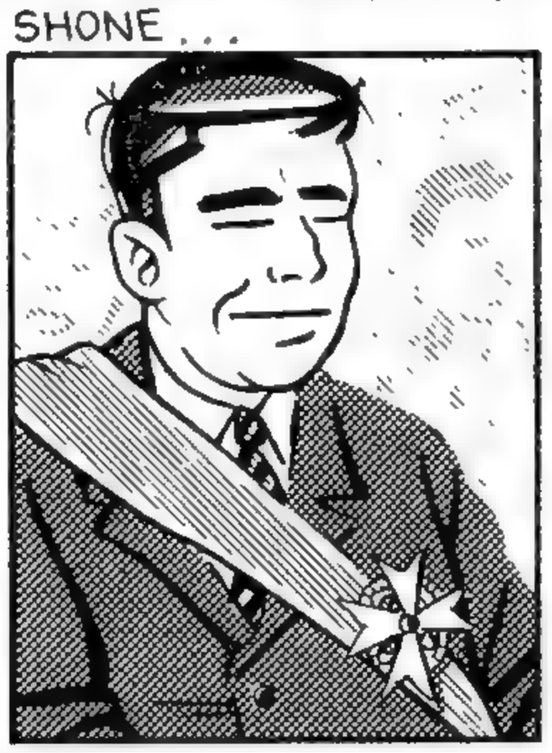
AND YET... I CAN STILL RECALL THAT DAY...

WHICH GLEAMED MORE? HIS MEDALS? HIS CAPPED TEETH?



OR THE GLAZED EYES OF THE FOOLS WHO SUPPORTED HIM?

THE MAYOR'S RIBBONS SHONE...



...LIKE THE EMPTY PLATES OF THE HUNGRY HIDDEN AWAY.

THAT DAY OF CHEERING.

...AS LONG AS YOU COULD AFFORD TO.

BUT THE BAND PLAYED ON.

THAT DAY....

THE DAY THE GENERAL CAME

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HISTORY MAY RECORD WHERE I WAS THAT MORNING
-IN THE HILLS ABOVE THE TOWN.
AWAY FROM THE TICKERTAPE.

I WAS YOUNG.

WHY AM I HERE? IT'S JUST A PARADE.

VERY YOUNG.

MY UNCLE JOSE'S EYE'S WERE LARGE AND SAD,
THE PAIN OF THE COUNTRY CARVED ON HIS FACE.

WHY AM I HIDDEN AWAY?

WHY?

HE DIDN'T WANT TO TALK. HE LOVED SILENCE.
HE REVERED IT. BUT, AFTER AN HOUR OF MY BADGERING...

...HE TOLD ME EVERYTHING.

"THERE WAS A TIME", JOSE BEGAN, "WHEN THE GENERAL'S POWER DERIVED FROM THE PEOPLE'S SUPPORT INSTEAD OF THEIR FEAR."

"THE GENERAL'S OVERTHROW OF THE JUNTA THAT PRECEDED HIM BEGAN NOT WITH A BLOOD-BATH, BUT RATHER WITH A CONSTRUCTIVE ACT."

"THE BRIDGE. BUILT BY THE GENERAL'S MEN."

"DESIGNED BY MACINTOSH."

"MACINTOSH WAS AN ENIGMA. HE EMERGED FROM THE JUNGLE IN A DINNER SUIT, AT THE GENERAL'S ENCAMPMENT."

"WITH A PAIR OF COWBOY BOOTS IN ONE HAND AND A SATCHEL OF DESIGNS IN THE OTHER."

AND IN MY TOWN THE PARADE BEGAN.

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"THE BRIDGE WAS BUILT UNDER THE GUISE OF IMPROVING TRADE BETWEEN THE REGIONS. BUT IT ALSO GOT THE GENERAL'S TROOPS WHERE HE NEEDED THEM."

"AFTER THE FIGHTING (WHICH WAS BRIEF) THE GENERAL ENTERED THE CAPITAL TO TEARS OF JOY FROM THE PEOPLE."

"EVERYONE WAS HAPPY..."

"...EXCEPT THOSE WITHIN THE JUNTA."

"CARMEN, THE GENERAL'S WOMAN, WAS TO ONE SIDE OF HIM, MACINTOSH TO THE OTHER, WHEN THE GENERAL SPOKE TO HIS PEOPLE FOR THE FIRST TIME."

"SUCH WORDS WE HEARD, SUCH PROMISES."

"HOW LONG BEFORE WE REALISED THAT THE ONLY CHANGES WERE FOR THE WORST. DISEASE IN PEACE TIME — THAT'S WHEN YOU REALLY GET A BODY COUNT."

"THE GENERAL DID NOTHING."

IN MY TOWN THE GENERAL LAID A WREATH.

FOR THOSE WHO HAD DIED IN HIS 'GLORIOUS ASCENSION TO POWER'.

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...AND THEN A SPEECH. SUCH WORDS. SUCH PROMISES.

"IT RAINED THE NIGHT OF THE ARGUMENT, ALL THOSE YEARS AGO. MACINTOSH AND THE GENERAL, THE COUNTRY'S MOST POWERFUL MEN, FIGHTING LIKE PEASANTS."

"THE NEXT MORNING THE GENERAL WAS DISCOVERED TRUSSED UP IN A CUPBOARD."

"AND MACINTOSH HAD LEFT AS HE'D ENTERED..."

"...AN ENIGMA."

"THE FOLLOWING NIGHT THE GENERAL TOOK CARMEN'S LIFE. HER AFFAIR WITH MACINTOSH WAS JUST TOO MUCH FOR HIM."

"YOU WERE THE GENERAL'S ONLY CHILD. CARMEN WAS YOUR MOTHER. AND ON THAT NIGHT YOU SAW HER MURDER."

"YOU SAW IT ALL."

"THEN HIS DRINKING STARTED, AND THE TANTRUMS. IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED THE GENERAL KILLED FOUR SERVANTS AND RAPED TWO MORE."

"WE, CARMEN'S FAMILY, FEARED FOR YOUR SAFETY. ALL OUR MONEY WENT INTO BRIBES FOR THE GUARDS AND WE GOT YOU AWAY."

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"YOU SAW YOUR MOTHER'S GRAVE ONCE — FOUR OR FIVE YOU WERE. DO YOU REMEMBER?"

"IT WAS A BRIEF VISIT. FIVE MINUTES OF PERIL AND THEN BACK INTO HIDING."

AND IN MY TOWN FOOLS CHEERED WHILE BABIES CRIED FOR LACK OF MILK.
FOOLS CHEERED THE BASTARD WHO'S KILLING THE COUNTRY AS HE ONCE KILLED MY MOTHER.

YOU HID ME FROM HIM..?!

HE SHOULD BE HIDING FROM ME..!

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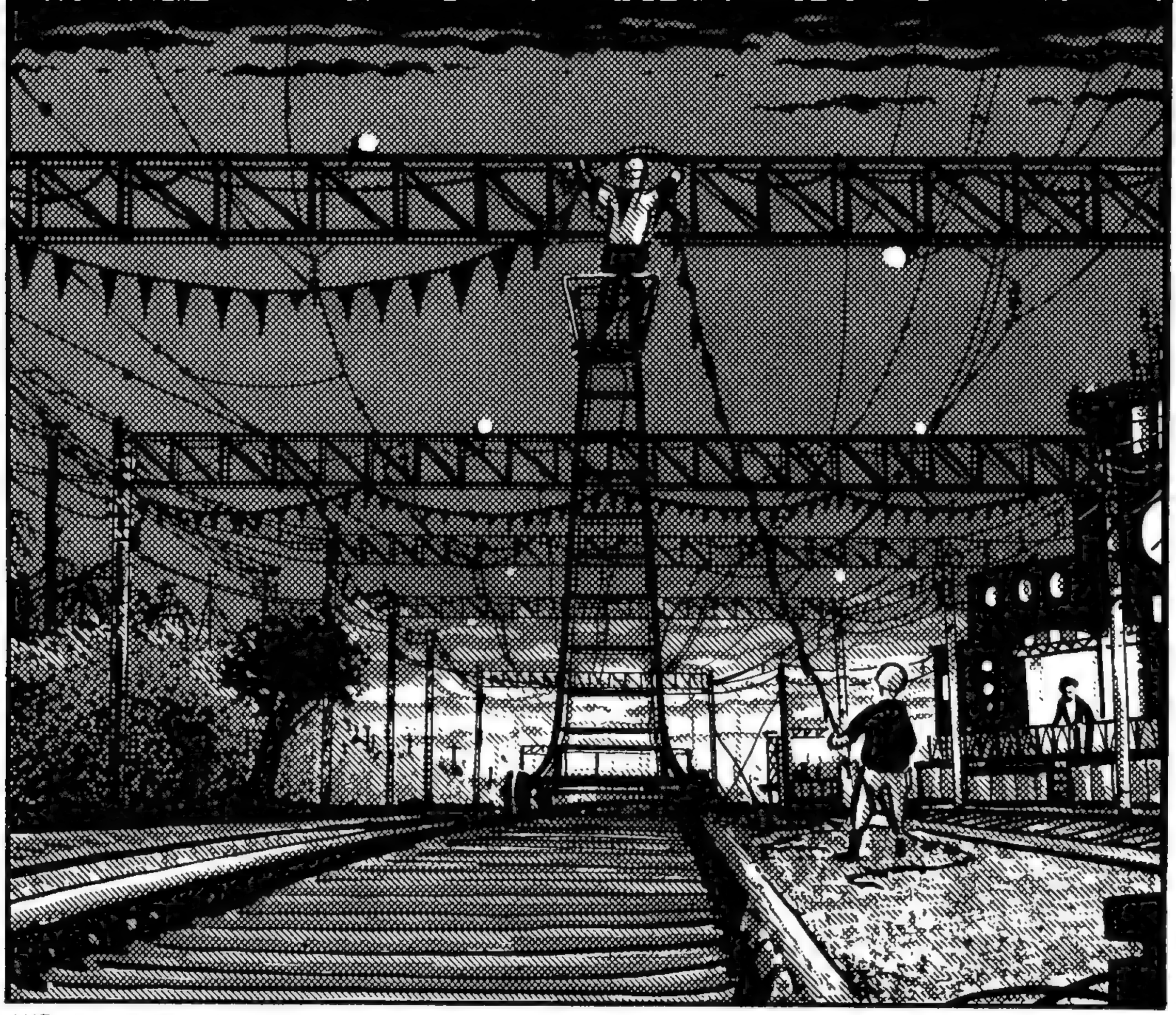

AND IN MY TOWN .... THE GENERAL HAD GONE.

TOMORROW ANOTHER TOWN WOULD BE GRACED WITH HIS PRESENCE.

I WAS FIFTEEN.
AND HAD BEEN CONTENT
IN MY EXPECTATIONS.

THE LAND, A WIFE AND
CHILDREN. PERHAPS
SAVING ENOUGH MONEY
FOR A FARMING DROID
IN MY RETIREMENT.

NOW THIS WAS FOR-
GOTTEN IN MY NEW-
FOUND CONVICTION.
MY WHOLE BEING SHOOK
FROM ITS INTENSITY.

I WAS FIFTEEN AND
I KNEW...

ONE DAY I WOULD
KILL MY FATHER.

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THE GENERAL IS DEAD

OUR GREAT LEADER'S FINEST HOUR

THE FACE OF A KILLER

Today the nation grieves at the death of our country's leader. He died from shock and medical complications following acid being thrown in his face by a fanatic. The General was tending the flowers in his orchid house at the time of the attack. He

The

AND SO I SIT AND LICK MY WOUNDS.

YESTERDAY I SUCCEEDED IN MY DESIRE. EIGHT AND A HALF YEARS AFTER THE DAY.

MY FATHER IS DEAD.

HA! I NEVER DREAMED SUCCESS WOULD HURT SO MUCH.

I WISH MY COUNTRY WELL. THAT GOOD WILL COME FROM WHAT I HAVE DONE. I WISH MY PEOPLE HAPPINESS. THAT THE POOR WILL SMILE AGAIN. I WISH...

SHIT! I WISH I HADN'T GOT CAUGHT.

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PETER MILLIGAN
BRETT EWINS
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emily, almost.

CLOUDS ARE NATURE'S PILLOWS, YOU SAID. FEATHERED WHISPERS A MILE HIGH.

WHILE THE ROCKS ARE WHAT THEY ARE..

AND WHERE THEY ARE

TO STOP THE WORLD FROM FLOATING AWAY

"AND THIS IS WHAT I BELIEVE," YOU SAID

THEN YOU LAUGHED AND RAN.

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BIRDS ARE NATURE'S THOUGHTS, YOU SAID, ALOFT ON WINGS OF DESIRE.

WHILE THE WINDS ARE WHAT THEY ARE...

AND WHERE THEY ARE

TO STOP THE WORLD FROM FLOATING AWAY

"AND THIS IS WHAT I BELIEVE," YOU SAID.

THEN YOU LAUGHED AND RAN.

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RAIN IS VERTICAL WIND, YOU SAID, WET FROM A THOUSAND PILLOWS' TEARS.

WHILE THE TREES ARE WHAT THEY ARE...

AND WHERE THEY ARE

TO STOP THE WORLD FROM FLOATING AWAY

"AND THIS IS WHAT I BELIEVE," YOU SAID.

THEN YOU LAUGHED AND RAN.

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SOMETIMES YOU MAKE ME FEEL AS THOUGH

I'M ALONE

CUT OFF

CAST OUT

AN ISLAND

WATCHING YOU - YOUR WORLD - YOUR HEART AT PLAY.

IN PAIN

I GASP

TO BELONG

TO CLING TO LOVE MY LIFE.

TO STOP MY WORLD FROM FLOATING AWAY.

"AND THIS IS WHAT YOU BELIEVE," YOU SAID,

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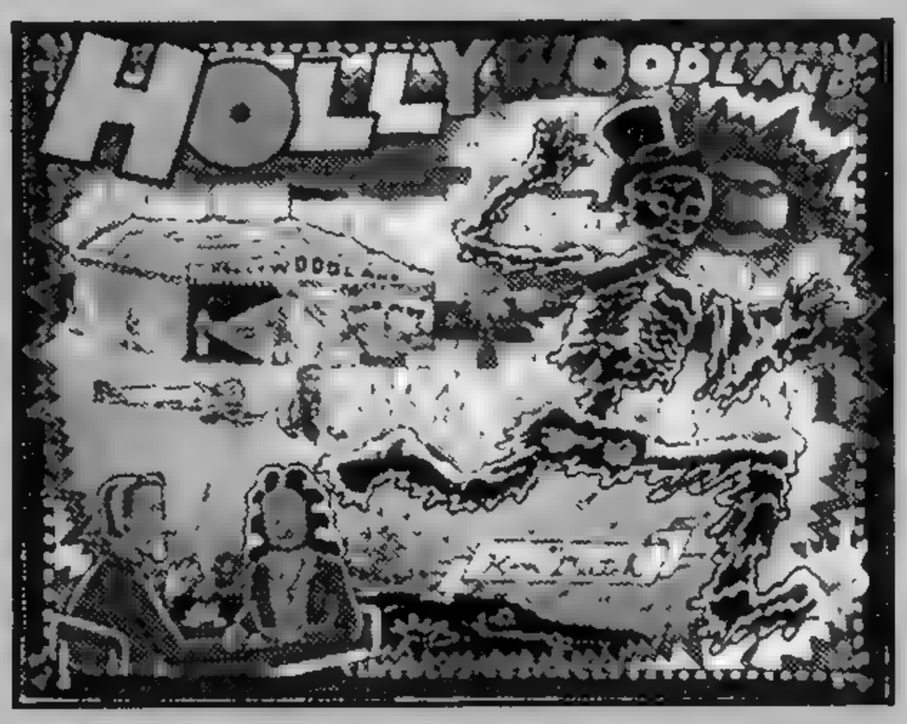

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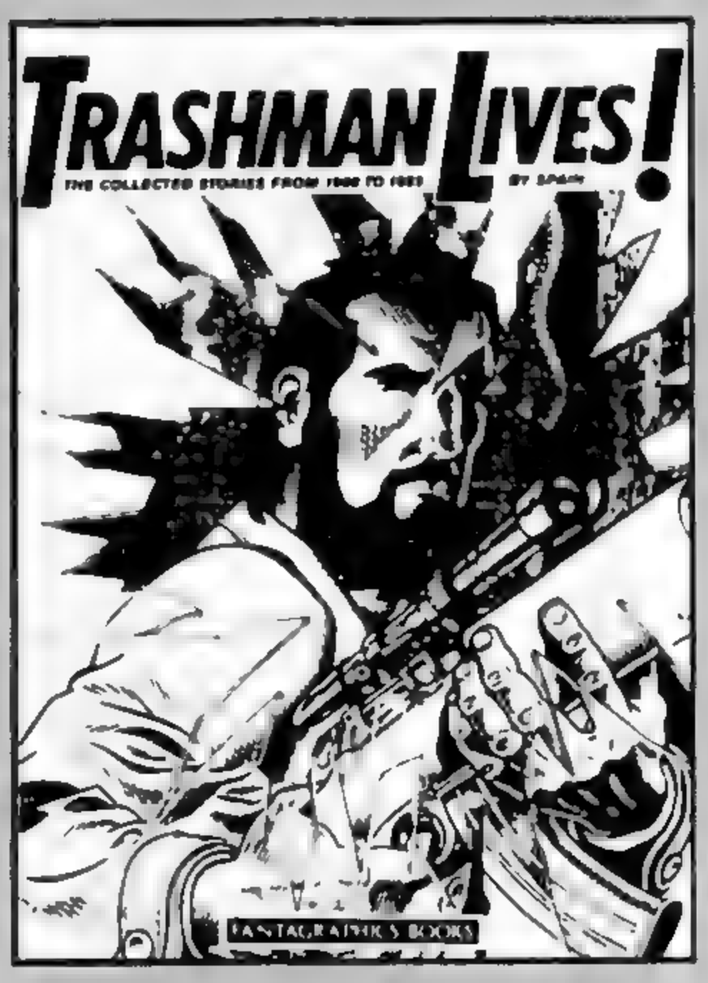

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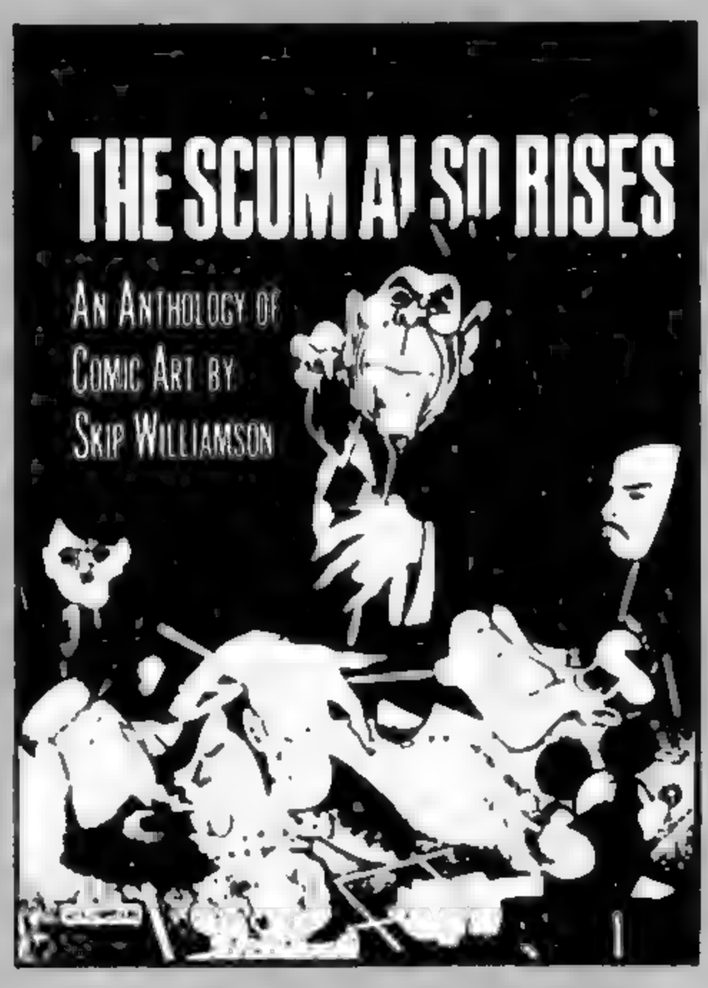

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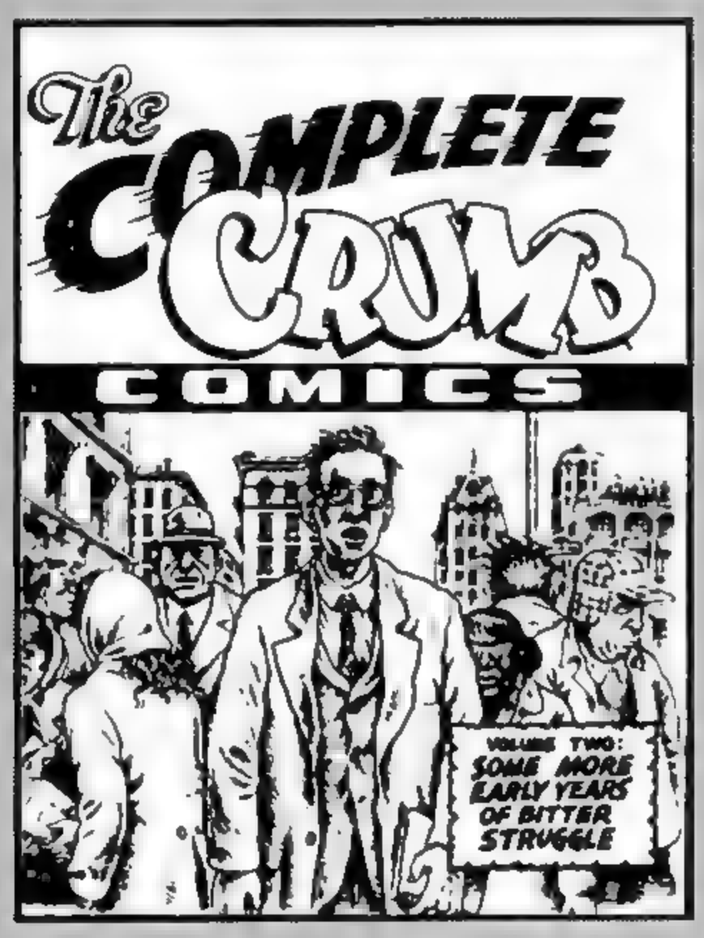

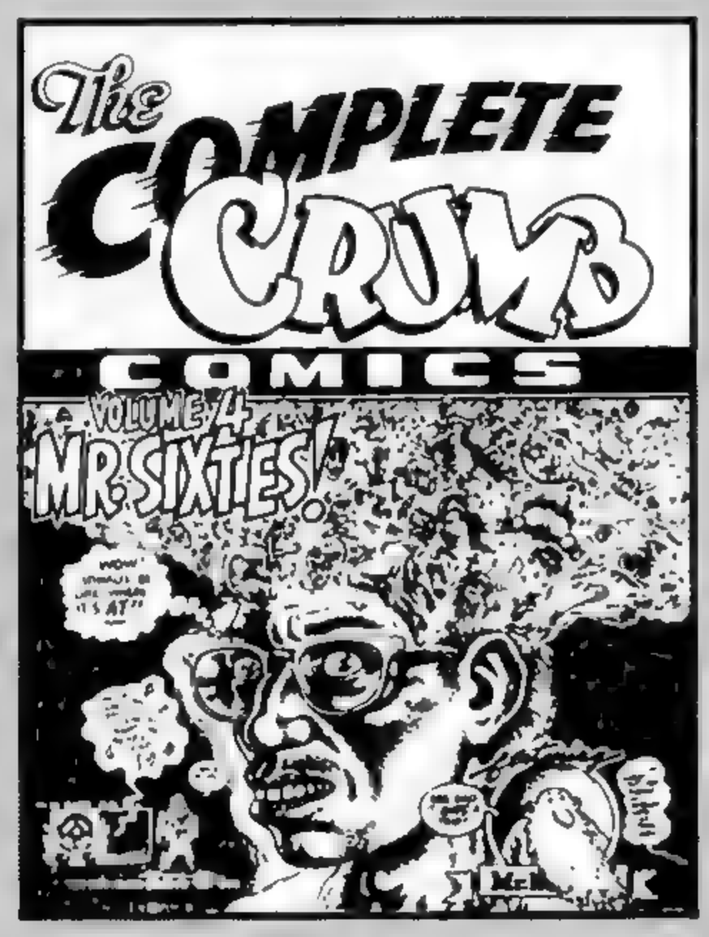

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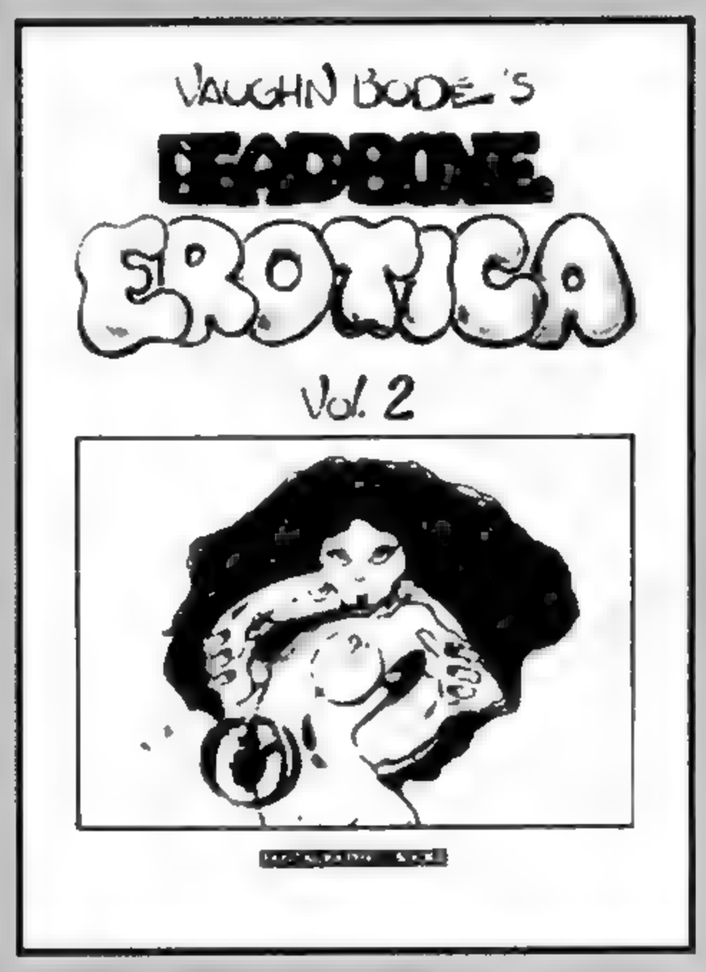

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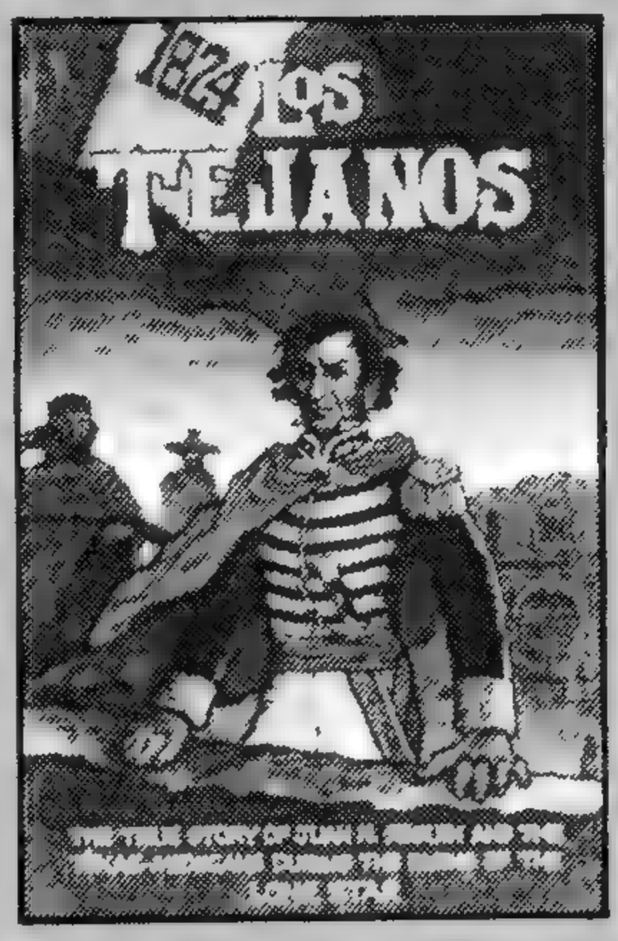

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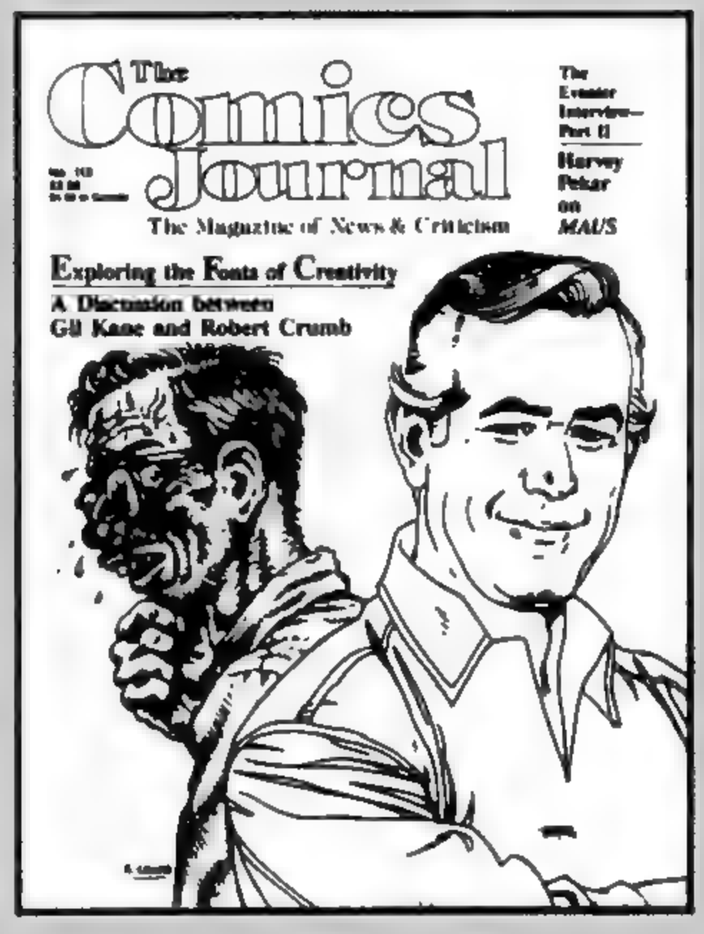
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The Magazine of News & Criticism
Harvey Pekar on MAUS
Exploring the Fonts of Creativity
A Discussion between
Gil Kane and Robert Crumb

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THE HERO OF THE TALE

I THINK HE MEANS BUSINESS, DON'T YOU?

I MEAN, I DON'T THINK HE'S BLUFFING.

SHOULD WE DO AS HE SAYS?

YES

YES

IF HE'S SO BLASTED *DETERMINED* TO DO IT, THEN LET HIM!

DALGODA

STORY BY JAN STRNAD (DALGODA CREATED BY STRNAD and FUJITAKE) ART BY KEVIN NOWLAN

BUT WHAT IF HE *HURTS* HIMSELF?

WOULDN'T A PROFESSIONAL (AND EXPENDABLE) *STUNT PERSON*—?

WHAT DO I PAY *INSURANCE* PREMIUMS FOR IF MY STAR CAN'T TAKE A FEW *RISKS* NOW AND THEN? DALGODA WANTS TO JUMP THE WALL, SO LET HIM JUMP THE WALL!

WELL, IF YOU SAY SO—

OKAY, DAL, THE SCENE'S YOURS! WE'RE READY WHEN YOU ARE!

HE'S READY!

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KEEP A STEADY PACE AS YOU RUN ALONG THE WALL SO WE CAN TIME THE LASER HITS TO GO OFF BEHIND YOU.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON YOUR SPOT UP AHEAD.

GOT IT!

HERE'S YOUR SPOT. WHEN YOU GET HERE, VAULT OVER THE WALL!

DON'T JUMP TOO SOON OR TOO LATE, OR YOU'LL MISS THE AIR-BAGS.

RIGHT.

COULDN'T THEY MAKE THE PLATFORM A LITTLE WIDER?

ARE YOU SURE THOSE AIRBAGS ARE BIG ENOUGH?

LOOK, DO YOU WANT TO DO THE STUNT YOURSELF OR NOT? TIME IS MONEY, DAL.

MAKE UP YOUR MIND!

I *HAVE* TO DO IT! I *WILL* DO IT! LET'S ROLL!

QUIET ON THE SET!

CAMERAS READY!

CHAD—YOU READY WITH THOSE LASER HITS?

READY!

OKAY, DALGODA! *ACTION!*

CRASH

CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH CRUNCH

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THAT'S IT!
THAT'S GOOD!
STEADY PACE, NOW!
POP
POP
POP
YOU'RE COMING UP TO YOUR SPOT!
WATCH FOR IT!
NOW! JUMP NOW!
POP
POP
I DID IT! I *DID* IT! FROM NOW ON I'M DOING *ALL* MY OWN STUNTS!
UH-OH....
SPLAT
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yoooooowww!

CRAK THUD SMAK CRUNCH BASH

oooowww!

GREAT FOOTAGE, DAL!

TOO BAD THE AIRBAGS WERE IN THE SHOT, THOUGH.

IT'S NO USE, CHIM. I'M AS LOUSY AT BEING A HERO IN *TELEVISION* AS I WAS IN REAL LIFE. I'M JUST NOT THE HEROIC TYPE.

DON'T BE SO HARD ON YOURSELF, DAL! IT WASN'T *YOUR* FAULT THE PLATFORM COLLAPSED.

IT ISN'T JUST THAT. I JUST THINK ABOUT MY CELEBRITY, AND REALLY, WHAT DID I DO TO DESERVE IT?

I WENT OFF ON AN IMPORTANT MISSION, FAILED AT IT, GOT LEFT BEHIND WHEN EVERYONE MOVED OFF OUR OLD PLANET AND ONTO THIS NEW ONE, AND FINALLY FOUND MY WAY HOME. SO THEY GIVE ME MY OWN TELE-VISION SERIES!

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BIG DEAL!

I'M FAMOUS BECAUSE I DID SOMETHING STUPID!

LIKE THAT LITTLE GIRL WHO FELL IN THE CREVICE AND EVERYBODY SHOWERED HER WITH MONEY AND PRESENTS WHEN THEY GOT HER OUT!

I'M NO HERO! OTHERWISE THEY WOULDN'T HAVE TO ***REWRITE*** ALL OF MY ADVENTURES!

OH, DAL--

OF ***COURSE*** THEY REWRITE EVERYTHING-- THAT'S TELEVISION!

AND I HAPPEN TO KNOW YOU BEHAVED ***VERY*** HEROICALLY IN REAL LIFE!

YOU MUST'VE DONE ***SOMETHING*** RIGHT!

AFTER ALL, ***I*** FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU.

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OKAY, PEOPLE, DALGODA'S BACK WITH US AND WE HAVE LOTS OF TIME TO MAKE UP, SO LET'S *GET MOVING!*

DAL, THIS IS *ARNO*. HE'S PLAYING THE PART OF THE Z-28 KILL-DRONE THAT ATTACKED YOU ON EARTH.

PLEASED TO MEET YOU. BUT--

--THE REAL KILL-DRONE WAS A ROBOT!

I'D HAVE THOUGHT THAT A *MECHANICAL* DRONE WOULD--

DECKER DINER

TOO EXPENSIVE!

HEY, YOU--MORE LITTER ON THAT STREET! THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE THE *EARTH*, YOU KNOW!

IT IS A GREAT HONOR TO MEET A TRUE HERO! I'M A VERY BIG FAN OF YOURS!

UH, THAT'S MY SORE ARM--

OH, SORRY. I TOO WAS WOUNDED IN THE NIMP WAR. GOT A METAL PLATE IN MY HEAD.

WELL, IT WASN'T ACTUALLY IN THE NIMP WAR THAT--

DAL?

GOT A MINUTE?

WE'VE MADE A FEW SCRIPT CHANGES.

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WE'VE BEEFED UP THE FIGHT SCENE A LITTLE. ADDED A SEQUENCE WHERE YOU HIT THE KILL-DRONE WITH A FRYING PAN, SEE, AND THEN YOU SLIP A KNIFE INTO ITS *CHEST CAVITY*--

AS I RECALL IT--

--ALL I DID WAS RUN LIKE HELL AND TRY TO DODGE THE DRONE'S LASER BLASTS!

LUCILE'S

FANNY

POSEY!

HELP ME!

THAT *THING*...!

I REMEMBER THAT THERE WAS A PUDDLE OF WATER ON THE FLOOR...

BOOM

...AND I WAS TOO SCARED TO KNOW IF IT WAS MY *OWN*!

MEN

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IF SPECIAL AGENT **BROWN** HADN'T SHOT THE DRONE FROM BEHIND, I'D HAVE DIED MY FIRST DAY ON EARTH!

AND THEN YOU HEROICALLY THROW YOURSELF AT THE KILL-DRONE WHILE THE BABY CRAWLS OFF TO SAFETY!

WELL--

--WHAT DO YOU THINK?

COULDN'T HAVE WRITTEN IT BETTER MYSELF.

ARNO!

IT WAS THE BATTERY, JUST LIKE I THOUGHT!

IT WAS DEAD!

CLANK!

WOOF!

WOW

I GOT A FRESH ONE OUT OF SUPPLIES. HOLD STILL. THIS'LL JUST TAKE A MINUTE.

ARNO?

WH-WHAT'RE YOU DOING?

Q-QUIT CL-CLOWNING, ARNO!

NOT ARNO!

AM... KILL-DRONE!

ARNO!

HEY-- *THAT* PUT A TWINKLE IN YOUR EYE!

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MMPH...?

KILL-DRONE... KILL!

ARNO... STAY BACK! YOU'RE NOT THE KILL-DRONE!

YOU'RE AN ACTOR!

A GREAT ACTOR!

YOUR ACCENT'S A LITTLE THICK, BUT OTHER-WISE--

HARRGH

AAAAAAAAARGH!

NOW KILL-DRONE MAD!

NO, ARNO! KILL-DRONES ARE MACHINES!

MACHINES DON'T GET MAD, ARNO! BUT YOU'RE MAD, SO YOU'RE NOT A KILL-DRONE! DON'T YOU UNDER-STAND?

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KRUNCH!

MAYBE I CAN PUT IT ANOTHER WAY!

GRRRRRR...

HOLD IT, ARNO!

D-DON'T MAKE ME SHOOT!

DON'T SHOOT! WE'VE ALREADY *PAID* HIM FOR THE EPISODE!

NOT ARNO! AM *KILL-DRONE!*

SO IS THIS *ART* IMITATING *LIFE*, OR *LIFE* IMITATING *ITSELF?*

ZOK

WOW

WOW

--OR AM I?

FUNNY, THE THINGS THAT RUN THROUGH YOUR MIND WHEN YOU'RE ABOUT TO DIE--

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SQUEEK SQUEEK SQUEEK

BWOOSH!!

SPOOF!

ARNO?

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SO THE DOCTOR FIGURED OUT THAT THE ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE ON ARNO'S FACE, ONCE THE NEW BATTERY WAS PUT IN, SHORTED OUT ON THE METAL PLATE IN HIS HEAD, CAUSING TEMPORARY DEMENTIA!

HIS BRAIN BLEW A CHIP, HUH? PRETTY WILD.

YEAH, IT WAS A ONE-IN-A-MILLION THING. ARNO AND THE STUDIO ARE SUING EACH OTHER. PRODUCTION'S SHUT DOWN FOR A MONTH. ARNO HAD A PAY-OR-PLAY CONTRACT, AND--

DAL--

ISN'T THERE SOMETHING WE COULD DO BESIDES SIT HERE AND TALK TELEVISION TALK?

OH, YOU'RE RIGHT. I'D ALMOST FORGOTTEN.

SOME CAMERAMAN FILMED THE WHOLE THING AND THEY'RE SHOWING IT ON THE NEWS! WAIT'LL YOU SEE ME IN ACTION! I WAS ***GREAT!***

BUZZZ

AND THE STAR OF THE SHOW, DALGODA, WAS SAVED AT THE LAST MINUTE BY A FAST-THINKING ***SECURITY GUARD*** WHO TURNED A FIRE HOSE ON THE RAMPAGING ARNO!

WHAT!?

GEAR

WELL, IT'S OBVIOUS WHO THE REAL HERO OF ***THIS*** STORY IS, ISN'T IT, BUL? MAYBE THAT SECURITY GUARD WILL GET ***HIS*** OWN SHOW!

LET'S HOPE SO, CONI! MEANWHILE, IN SPORTS....

The End

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ART AND LIFE ARE NEVER LIVED AT THE SAME PACE. ART IS TIMELESS, WHILE IN LIFE THERE IS NEVER ENOUGH TIME...

WHAT KIND OF EXAMPLE ARE YOU FOR THE KIDS -- ALWAYS STUFFING YOURSELF WITH RUBBISH, ALWAYS DOING TWO THINGS AT ONCE?

YEAH, YEAH!

SHUT UP, BITCH...

A LOT ON HIS PLATE

SCRIPT: GRAHAM MARKS. ART: JOHN 'NOSHER' BOLTON. LETTERS: ZIPP NOLAN.

YOU NEVER LISTEN TO A WORD I SAY -- THE STUFF THEY PUT IN THAT FOOD. MORE CHEMICALS THAN ANYTHING...

RIGHT...

GOD, WHO'D BE A MARRIED TEACHER? LECTURED AT HOME, IGNORED AT WORK.

...THOSE SAUSAGES, LORD KNOWS WHAT YOU'RE EATING. AND THEY SPRAY THE VEGETABLES WITH ALL SORTS... YOU NEVER EAT ANYTHING HEALTHY.

LET ME FINISH, WILL YOU?

=YECHH!= DON'T KNOW IF IT'S HER OR THE FOOD, BUT I FEEL QUEASY...

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YOU SHOULD READ THE PAPERS. LISTEN TO SOME NEWS...THEY'RE FINDING OUT SOME AWFUL THINGS. THAT EDWINA CURRY, SHE MAY BE A TORY, BUT SHE WAS RIGHT ABOUT EGGS...

LEAVE IT OUT!

IF I DON'T GET THIS DONE I'LL HAVE NOTHING FOR THE FOURTH YEARS TOMORROW...OHH, MY HEAD...AND I'VE GOT 5B'S ESSAYS TO MARK.

BBURRRRRRR...

...AND I SAW THIS PROGRAMME, THEY'RE PUTTING HORMONES IN THE MEAT, AND THE POLLUTION... ...LEAD FROM ALL THE CARS--HAVE YOU HAD OUR CAR CONVERTED YET?

OH, CHRIST...

LOOK AT ALL THE 'E'S IN THAT PUDDING STUFF YOU HAVE--IT'S NOTHING BUT 'E'S, THERE'S NOTHING REAL IN IT. THAT CAN'T BE GOOD--I WON'T LET THE KIDS NEAR IT...

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SHIT!!

NEXT DOOR HAVE. THEY'VE GONE ALL ORGANIC. VEGETARIAN, TOO, I THINK SHE SAID...

YOU LOOK DREADFUL! I THINK WE'LL GO ORGANIC NEXT WEEK, IT'LL DO YOU GOOD--I'M CHUCKING OUT ALL YOUR RUBBISHY STUFF AND PUTTING YOU ON A HEALTHY DIET!

MUST BE GETTING TOO INVOLVED WITH MY WORK...

WITH MANY THANKS TO GIUSEPPE ARCIMBOLDO OF MILAN (1537-93, OR THEREABOUTS).

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A1 BOOK 5
COMING IN OCTOBER

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Sun
Sun
Sun
Sun
Guardian
Sun
The Bojeffries Saga
Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...
Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...
Maxwells, Murdochs, circulations flagging
Crammed into your letter-box
Until it's almost gagging...
Colour Sup.. Lit. Sup., every tabloid format,
If your dog don't chew 'em up
You'll find 'em on the doormat.
Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...
Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...
"Song of the Terraces"
A light opera with libretto by Mr. A. Moore
and full orchestration by Mr. S. Parkhouse
With special thanks to Raymond and Fiona of Architects Plus

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We are the paperboys
We have foregone the joys
Of comics, sweets and toys
Of childhood capers.

Each dawn while you relax,
We hoist our bulging sacks
And, in our anoraks,
We bring you papers!

Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...
Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...

Page three, transfer fee, "Is your man a sex-bomb?"
Which M.P.'s been compromised outside a Gent's in Wrexham?

Outrage, sport's page,
"Di: her Secret Vices!"
Someone out of "Neighbours"
Whose domestic life's in crisis...

Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...
Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...

When letter-boxes snap
Pity the little chap
Who does not write the crap
But is its victim.

For while the world's asleep,
He works to earn his keep
Lest, with Poll-tax so steep,
His folks evict him.

Sun, sun, sun, sun, sun, Guardian sun...
sun, sun, sun, sun, sun, Guardian, sun...

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Mit Tuppervare und Thermos as my only real requirements I vill toil from dawn to dusk und nefter shirk...

...und I haf only nineteen years to go until retirement So I vhistle as I make my way to vherk!

We've little dicks and big dogs And we're not too fond of nig-nogs But we whistle as we make our way to work!

HAHAR!

At veekends I vill shop for shelving down at M.F.I. Or vatch a fourth diwision team at play I'd like to vin der futball pools und then retire und die So I vhistle as I go to vherk each day!

Dreams of Helgas and of Heidis Bonk the wife alternate Fridays But we whistle as we go to work each day!

SVING IT, YU KATS! HAHAR!

If I'm depressed by getting up at twenty five to eight Und trudging off through rain und hail und snow

I tink about three million Giro cheques arriving late Una I vhistle as away to vherk I go!

We've enough for food and trousers And we've bought our Council houses, so we whistle...

Yes, we whistle...

Still we whistle as away to work we go-o-oo-ooo!

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There are six hundred women in this council cattle pen With nought in common save for their biology.

Who thus in conversation tend to stick to kids and men and other horrid facts of gynaecology

Our deepest fantasies are of bereavement or divorce Though Barry White brings colour to our cheeks.

We brag about how long we have avoided intercourse By feigning menstrual flows that last for weeks.

Their mums taught them to make Victoria sponges that were deft And to unplug the telly when it thundered.

Then on into the Valium and the shadow of "Dreft" ... rode the six hundred.

Sometimes we meet in twos or threes to get things off our chest Drink "Strongbow" when the minutes seem to creep

Or rent a video called "Black Emanuelle Goes West" Discuss our sex-lives, giggle, burp and weep.

Six hundred scratched recordings of Ken Dodd and "Happiness" Six hundred breakdowns, and, when life is done, Six hundred lame obituaries in the local press...

That read: "The angels called and off went Mum."

The three-piece-suite we bought last week will probably see us out Life's Mills and Boon must reach its final pages

We think Death sounds quite nice: We've no idea what Life's about. And we haven't had a good lie-in for ages.

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THIEF! THIEF!
THIEF! THIEF!

HELP MEEE!
HELP MEEE!

The car alarms are we! Hark while our rhapsody
Disturbs those mornings that you choose to lie in bed on.

If dogs do something coarse against the rear exhaust
We scream like thermo-nuclear Armageddon.

THIEF!
THIEF!

THIEF!
THIEF!

HELP MEEE!
HELP MEEE!

And when the theft is real
Our screams are not believed
Hearing our fading squeal
Folks simply look relieved...

They burp six hundred babies
Who throw up into their hair,
Upsetting their Madonna-like demeanour...

Six hundred tots refuse to sleep,
'til mother, in despair,
Tries half a Mogadon
In their Ribena!

THIEF! THIEF!
THIEF! THIEF!

HELP MEEEE!
HELP MEEEE!

Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun

Mastheads, "Bastards!", pictures of the Queen Mum
All it's really good for is to make sure you've a clean bum...

Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Sun, Guardian, Sun...

Vosh the car und vatch Eastenders
Get confused about our genders...

Clean six hundred toilets neatly
Though he's missed the bowl completely...

What Newsagents pay's atrocious
So we steal Ferrero Roches...

Just for spite we scream much harder
If we're fitted to a Lada...

But one thing we all agree...

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THIS IS OUR TERRACE SYMPHONEEEEEE!!

OY!

OY, WHAT D'YE THINK YER PLAYIN' AT? BLOODY SINGIN', BLOODY DANCIN'...

IT'S TWENTY TO EIGHT IN THE MORNIN'!

OH.

SORRY...

NEVER MIND "SORRY"! I'LL "SORRY" YOU IN A MINUTE!

GOO ON! JUST BLOODY CLEAR OFF AND TAKE YER ACID HOUSE PARTY WITH YER!

SHUDDAM!

IT WAS BREAKFAST TIME. THE HILLS WERE ALIVE WITH THE SOUND OF MUESLI...

END

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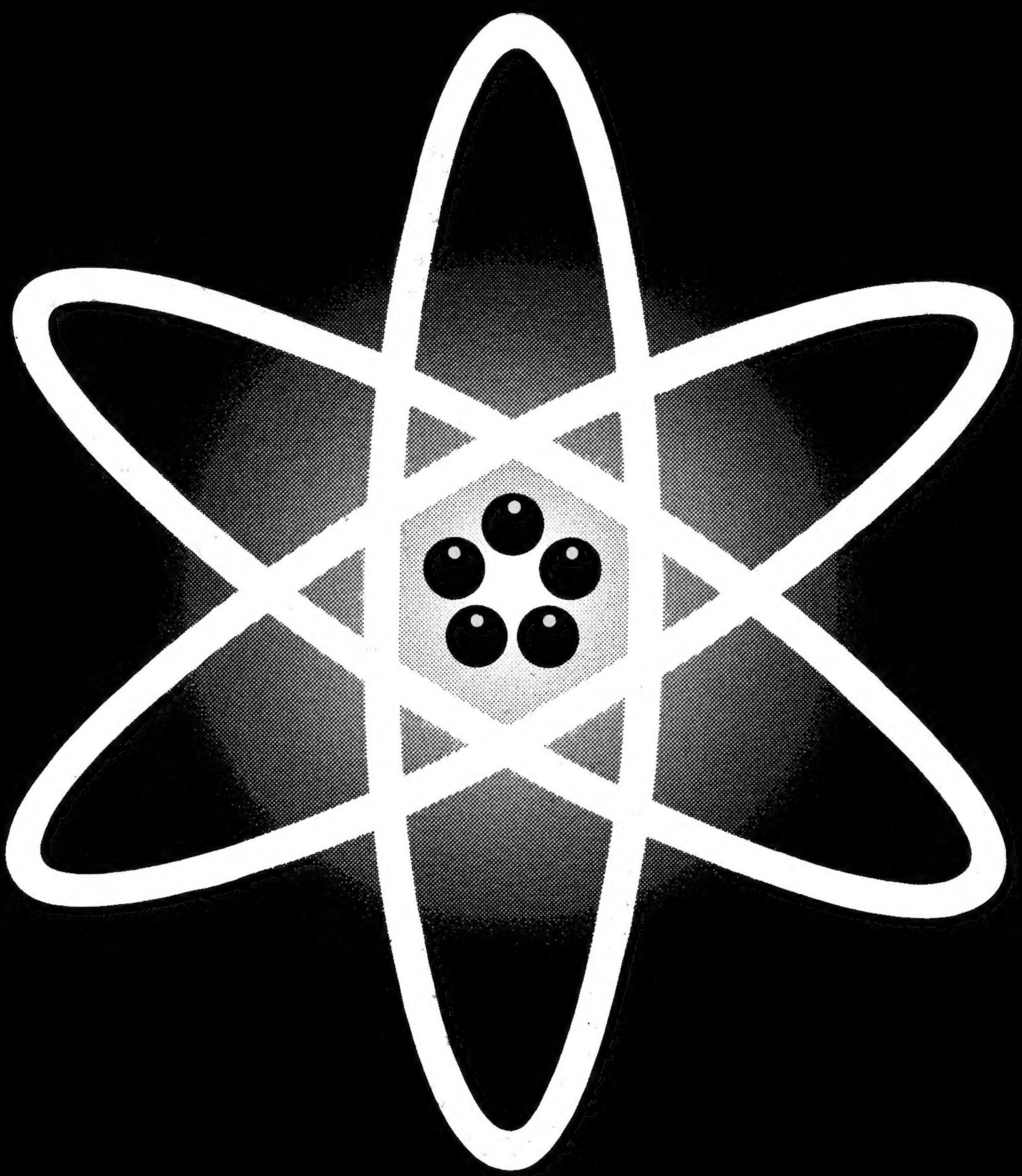

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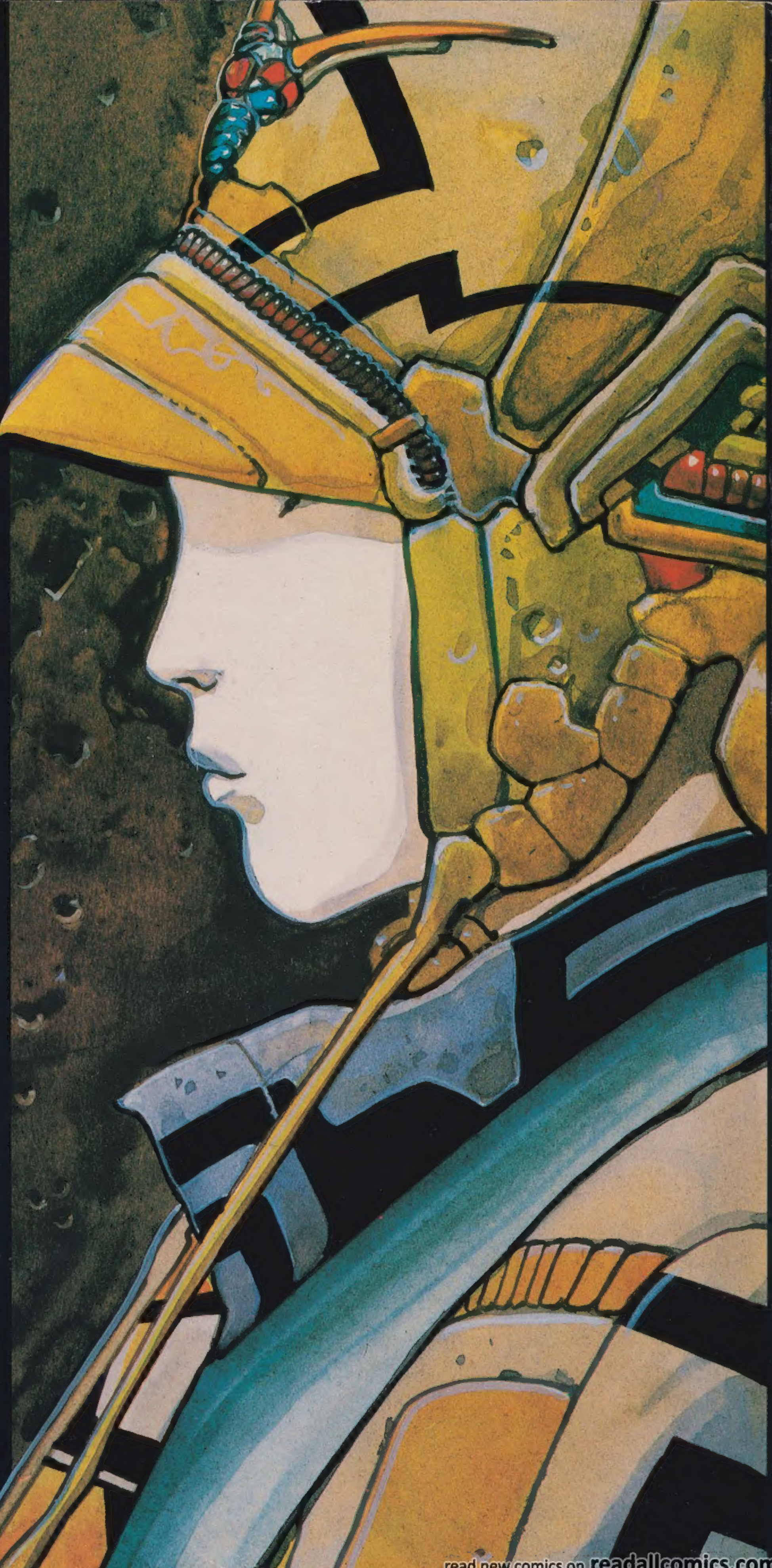
ATOMEKA

A1 BOOK 4



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